



# **EL DORADO COUNTY**

## **GENERAL PLAN UPDATE**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

**December 1994**

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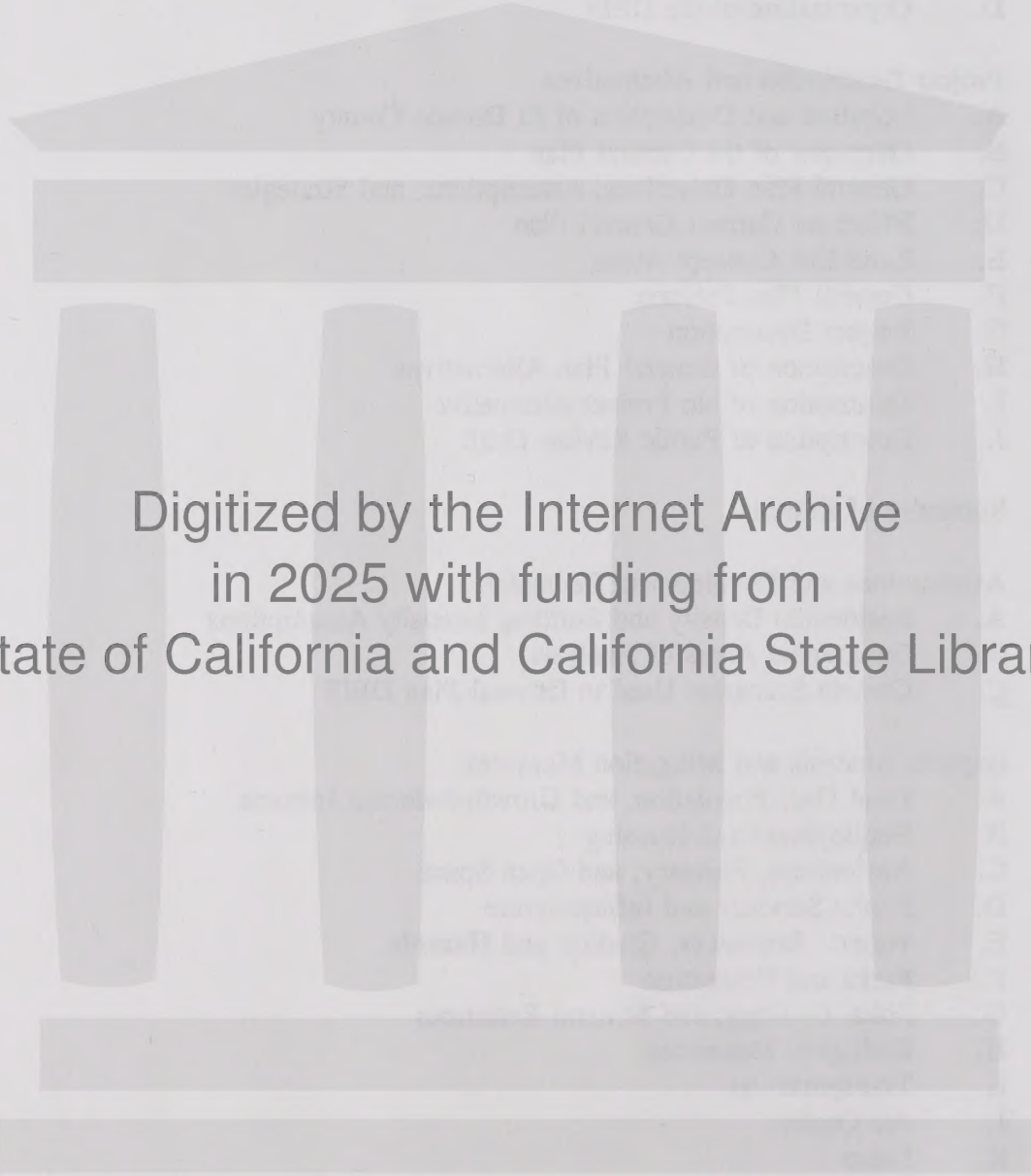
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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Purpose and Scope of the General Plan EIR**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) mandates the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for projects or programs that have the potential to result in significant environmental impacts. Detailed requirements concerning both content and process are set forth in the California Administrative Code, Title 14, Chapter 3: *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act* (hereinafter referred to as the *CEQA Guidelines*).

This General Plan DEIR was prepared consistent with Section 15168 of the *CEQA Guidelines* which allows EIRs to be prepared on “a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project.” This DEIR analyzes the environmental impacts of a range of policy alternatives expressed both as written text and as graphic representations on land use maps. The impacts analysis is, by necessity, general in nature. It is not intended to provide project-specific analysis for individual projects, although future projects may tier off information in this DEIR. Mitigation measures take the form of additional policies or modifications to existing policies. As such, the Plan policies, together with those changed and/or modified as a result of this DEIR, will constitute program solutions to issues or impacts raised by the General Plan.

This DEIR serves three basic purposes. First, it establishes the environmental framework for adoption of the El Dorado County General Plan, providing information to the public, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors concerning the potential consequences of adopting the Plan. Secondly, it serves as a first tier EIR for subsequent EIRs on projects implementing the General Plan such as community plans, specific plans, and subdivisions. Finally, it establishes the basis for review of programs that will eventually be implemented in the Zoning Ordinance that can lead to streamlining of the land use permit process.

### **B. Limitations of General Plan EIR**

Certain land uses are not regulated by the General Plan and other local zoning regulations, but are enabled through State and Federal laws. The specific types of land uses include:

1. All hydroelectric power generating facilities regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).
2. Lands subject to the Forest Practices Act of 1973 (Public Resource Code Section 4591).
3. Employee Housing Act of 1992.



4. Public Access to Public Resources (Government Code Section 66478.4).
5. Community College Sites (Education Code Section 81033).
6. Residential Health Care Facilities for six or fewer persons (Health and Safety Code Section 1267.8).
7. Residential Community Care Facilities for six or fewer persons (Health and Safety Code Section 1566.3).
8. Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly for six or fewer persons (Health and Safety Code Section 1568.0831 and 1569.85).
9. Residential Alcoholism Recovery Facilities for six or fewer persons (Health and Safety Code Section 11834.23).
10. Small Family Day Care Homes (Health and Safety Code Section 1597.45).
11. Residential Care Home for six or fewer mentally disordered, handicapped persons or dependent and neglected children (Health and Safety Code Section 5116).

Although some of these preemptive uses can have an impact on the General Plan, they are deemed to meet Statewide and regional environmental, social and economic goals that can best be accommodated through State and Federal controls.

#### **C. Special Planning Areas Not Directly a Part of the General Plan**

A number of special planning areas that are related to but not a part of the General Plan are analyzed in this DEIR. These include the General Plans for the Cities of Placerville and South Lake Tahoe; the Regional Plan for the Lake Tahoe Basin administered by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency; the Airport Land Use Plans for the Cameron Park, Placerville, Georgetown, and Lake Tahoe Airports; the California State Parks and Recreation Department Master Plans for the Marshall Gold Discovery Park in Coloma and the Auburn State Recreation Area along the Middle Fork of the American River; and El Dorado County's River Management Plan, South Fork of the American River. Some of these plans should be reviewed and updated in response to this General Plan.



## **D. Organization of DEIR**

The main body of this DEIR is divided into seven chapters organized as follows:

Chapter I provides an overview of the project and process.

Chapter II describes the project setting, defines the Plan and Alternatives, and provides background information on the General Plan update process.

Chapter III provides a summary of impacts and significance conclusions.

Chapter IV summarizes and explains the development potential estimates upon which much of the rest of the assessment is based.

Chapter V contains the environmental impacts analysis for the Project Description and Alternatives.

Chapter VI addresses the mandatory EIR sections, including significant adverse impacts which cannot be avoided, short-term versus long-term productivity, energy conservation, and the environmentally-preferred Alternative.

Chapter VII contains the Appendices for this DEIR.

## **II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

### **A. Location and Description of El Dorado County**

El Dorado County is located in the northeastern portion of California just east of Sacramento and west of the Nevada border, as shown in Figure II-2. The County is approximately 1,713 square miles in size and extends from the Sierra Nevada foothills to the Tahoe Basin. There are two incorporated cities within the County: Placerville and the City of South Lake Tahoe. The majority of the population is located in the unincorporated areas outside these cities.

The climate and landscape of the County changes with its ascending elevation from west to east. The County's lands range in elevation from 200 feet in the western foothills to more than 10,000 feet along the Sierra crest. Principal vegetation types include grassland, oak woodland, chaparral, mixed conifer forests, and sub-alpine communities. Summers are generally warm, and winters are temperate in the foothills. In the higher elevations of the Sierra Nevada, the summer temperatures tend to be lower and winters are harsher and characterized by moderate snowfall during most years.



## B. Overview of the General Plan

The updated General Plan (two primary plans) for El Dorado County is intended to guide the growth and development of the County through the year 2015. The two primary plans reflect and respond to market growth projections to the year 2015. Generally, all versions of the General Plan evaluated in this DEIR will accommodate County-wide market population growth projections.

Related actions which will follow and/or accompany General Plan adoption include: County-wide consistency rezoning, revisions to the *Zoning Ordinance*, *County Design and Improvement Standards Manual*, and *Major and Minor Land Division Ordinances*, and other applicable ordinances. These related actions may be subject to subsequent environmental review and may either rely on or tier off this DEIR.

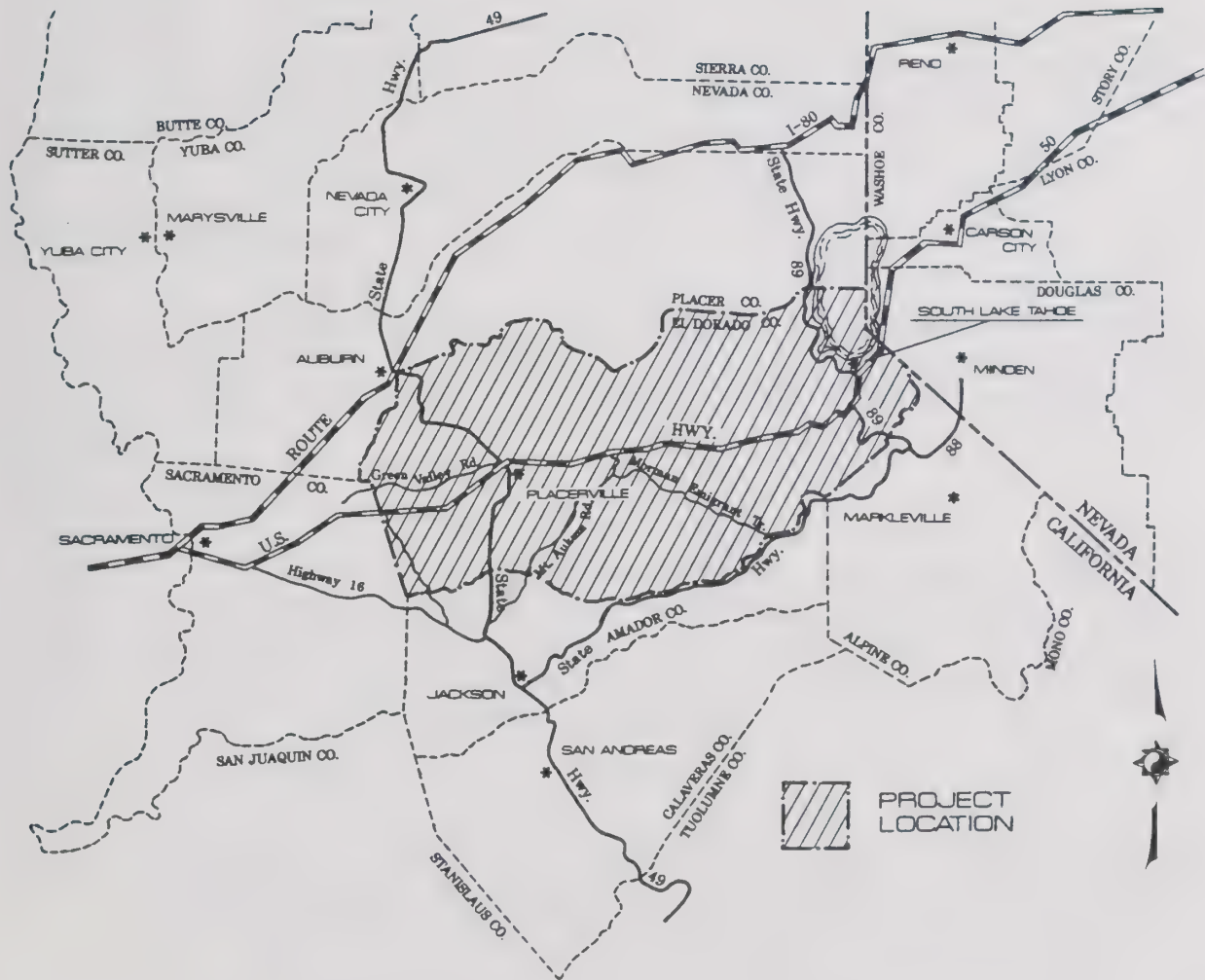
As mentioned in the Introduction, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors has defined two primary alternatives which are to be equally analyzed in the DEIR: the higher growth alternative known as the Project Description and the lower growth version known as the General Plan Alternative. The No Project Alternative is also considered but to a lesser degree. The Public Review Draft General Plan is introduced as an alternative but is not specifically analyzed since its impacts would fall between the Project Description and the General Plan Alternative.

Overall, both primary versions share the same goals, objectives, assumptions, strategies, and concepts. Both consist of the General Plan Land Use Maps and two documents, Volume I and Volume II. Volume I contains the *Statement of Goals, Objectives, and Policies* and the following nine elements: *Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Public Services and Utilities, Public Health and Safety, Conservation and Open Space, Agriculture and Forestry, Parks and Recreation, and Tahoe Basin*. Volume II contains the Background Information.

The primary differences between the Project Description and the General Plan Alternative include density and types of land use designations, policies contained within the different elements, and the land use map. The following section summarizes many of the similarities and differences between these two versions while, at the same time, giving a general overview of the content inherent to both.



# GENERAL VICINITY MAP







## **C. General Plan Objectives, Assumptions, and Strategies**

### Objectives

It is the intent of both the Project Description and the General Plan Alternative, through the appropriate application of the Plan Assumptions, Strategies, and Concepts to:

1. Foster a rural quality of life;
2. Sustain a quality environment;
3. Develop a strong, diversified, sustainable local economy;
4. Plan land use patterns which will determine the level of public services appropriate to the character, economy, and environment of each region;
5. Accommodate the County's fair share of regional growth projections and affordable housing; and
6. Conserve, protect, and manage the County's natural resources.

### Assumptions

Plan assumptions are contained in Chapter 1 of the *Goals, Objectives, and Policies* document of the Project Description. Fundamental to this analysis is the assumption that additional water supplies will be developed to support projected growth.

### Strategies

The Plan also contains seven primary strategies that are basically the same in the two versions of the General Plan. Neither Plan provides a strategy to improve the jobs-to-housing-unit ratio that currently exists. Both Plans accommodate the market forecast while requiring consistency with the Goals, Objectives, Policies, and land use map designations be maintained.

## **D. Effect on Current General Plan**

The General Plan update will replace the 1981 *Long Range Land Use Plan* and the 24 *Area Plans* with a single plan that incorporates and expands upon the planning concepts contained within those documents.

## **E. Land Use Concept Areas**

The proposed General Plan divides the County into three broad "Planning Concept Areas": Community Regions, Rural Centers, and Rural Regions. These planning concepts evolved and largely reflect the consolidation of urban lands into compact clusters contained in the 1981 *Long Range Land Use Plan*. The Plan provides for the consolidation of intensive land uses to provide cost effective

infrastructure and urban services while discouraging urban and suburban sprawl. Following is a definition of each of these categories.

*Community Regions*—These are identified as: El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park, El Dorado, Diamond Springs, Shingle Springs, Pollock Pines, the City of Placerville and unincorporated areas, the City of South Lake Tahoe and unincorporated areas, and Meyers. Community Regions are intended to allow for continued population growth, economic expansion, and employment growth while protecting and preserving the character and extent of existing Rural Centers and urban communities. Three new Planned Communities are provided for in the Community Regions. Public water and sewer systems are mandated within Community Regions.

*Rural Centers*—These are identified as: Camino, Coloma, Cool, Fairplay, Garden Valley, Georgetown, Greenwood, Gray's Corner, Grizzly Flat, Kelsey, Kyburz, Latrobe, Lotus, Mosquito, Mount Ralston, Mt. Aukum, Nashville, Oak Hill, Phillips, Pilot Hill, Pleasant Valley, Quintette, Rescue, Somerset, and Strawberry. Rural Centers are intended to recognize existing town centers within Rural Regions which provide a focus of activity and provide goods and services to surrounding areas.

*Rural Regions*—All lands not within the boundaries of a Community Region, Rural Center, or New Community are placed within Rural Regions. Rural Regions are intended to provide a land use pattern that maintains the open character of the County, protects its natural resources, recognizes land and infrastructure constraints, and natural hazards, and protects agricultural and forest areas.

Also contained within the proposed General Plan are five overlay designations, described as follows:

*Agricultural Districts*—The purpose of this designation is to identify the County's "choice" soils (Federally-designated prime, State-designated unique or important, and County-designated locally important soils), conserve and protect important agricultural lands, maintain viable agricultural-based communities, encourage the expansion of agricultural activities and production, and discourage incompatible land uses.

*Platted Lands*—This overlay identifies areas with groups of adjacent parcels in Rural Regions that have existing levels of density that would ordinarily be inappropriate due to capability constraints and/or existing important natural resources. Parcels within this overlay would not be permitted to subdivide into parcels smaller than those allowed by the base land use designation. This overlay would discourage the further subdivision of already inconsistent parcels.



Expansion of the Platted Lands overlay category cannot occur as a means to accommodate subdivision of adjacent lands.

*Ecological Preserve*—This overlay establishes the ability to protect rare and endangered plant and animal species habitat. The overlay would be placed on an appropriate base land use designation and enable densities to be clustered on-site, transferred off-site, or otherwise mitigated. Implementation strategies for these lands would need to be developed and approved as part of future placement of this overlay designation on the land use map.

*Non-Jurisdictional Lands*—This overlay designates all lands under the jurisdiction of the State and Federal governments and the incorporated Cities of Placerville and South Lake Tahoe. The County would provide coordination with the appropriate entities on land use designations, development standards, funding programs, annexations, and infrastructure issues.

*Planned Community*—This overlay identifies three areas considered suitable for new communities, with an emphasis on clustering land uses to minimize impacts to natural and man-made resources and other impacts, and encourages a more efficient use of public or private services. The use of modern planning and development techniques would be encouraged along with provision of public benefit.

## **F. General Plan Policies**

While there are two primary Alternatives that constitute this General Plan update, there are a number of consistent policy directions that differ only in their approach and, in some cases, outcome. The following highlights these key policy areas:

1. Both Plans provide land area for the establishment of three new communities. Each has similar policies providing for the treatment of these new communities. They both address affordable housing without placing mandatory inclusionary requirements on future developments.
2. There are three major density transfer options that are generally allowed in each version of the Plan. They include variable lot size developments, planned development (clustering and open space), and noncontiguous density transfers.
3. Each Plan addresses scenic corridor issues and recognizes the importance of community design components that include Design Review districts and Scenic Corridor zoning standards.

4. Community separation to prevent communities from growing together, losing their identity and losing their rural character.
5. Both Plans have a density bonus and density reduction program that differ from one another.
6. Parks and recreation is an active component of each Plan.
7. Concurrency of infrastructure, water reserves, schools, roads, public facilities and services drive each Plan, with differences in approach. Each Plan specifies levels of service standards under which new development must be compared.
8. Each Plan encourages alternate forms of transportation with an emphasis on non-vehicular measures to be included in new development.
9. Both Plans provide lot size buffers and setbacks for new subdivisions adjacent to timber and agricultural lands.
10. Community noise standards are included that provide protection to sensitive land uses (schools, hospitals, residences, etc.). Noise standards are lower in Rural Regions.
11. Each Plan addresses public safety issues associated with naturally-occurring hazards (earthquakes, flooding, wildland fires, etc.).
12. Affordable housing incentives are provided, but there are no clear mandates for new development to accommodate or provide such housing.
13. Natural resource protection is provided in both Plans but differ in the manner and degree of treatment. The Plans differ in the definition of natural resources.
14. Both Plans require urban services within Community Regions.

The remaining summary in this chapter does not address the differences in these primary policy areas. The balance of the DEIR addresses them to the extent that environmental issues are raised. This DEIR reflects upon those Plan features that may result in a significant effect on the environment. In addition to the environmental impacts, it is noted that there are improvements to policy language that would serve to clarify the Plan and aid in achieving internal consistency. However, it is beyond the scope of the DEIR to conduct such an analysis.



## G. Project Description

The proposed El Dorado County General Plan consists of the General Plan Land Use Maps and two documents: *Volume I—Statement of Goals, Objectives, and Policies*; and *Volume II—Background Information, El Dorado County General Plan (1994)*. The *Volume II—Background Information* inventories and analyzes existing conditions and trends in El Dorado County.

The *Volume I* document contains the principles, goals, objectives, and policies that constitute El Dorado County's formal requirements and standards for land uses, development, and environmental quality. It contains the following ten chapters:

1. Introduction

This chapter includes a description of the Plan's Purpose, a Statement of Vision, Plan Assumptions, Plan Strategies, Plan Concepts, and guidelines for using the Plan.

2. Land Use Element

This element sets forth the specific goals, objectives, and policies to guide the intensity, location, distribution, and visual appearance of land uses. The General Plan Land Use Map is also a component of this element. The land use map graphically represents the County's goals, objectives, and policies in terms of the location and distribution of the various land use designations. It also identifies and emphasizes the protection of important natural resource lands.

3. Circulation Element

This element sets forth a comprehensive strategy for planning, developing, and maintaining a County-wide transportation system, including the creation of new transportation corridors to serve existing and planned land uses. An objective of the Circulation Element is to recognize and promote alternative transportation modes which reduce air quality impacts.

4. Housing Element

This element identifies and analyzes existing and projected housing needs; sets forth goals, objectives, and policies relative to the maintenance, improvement, and development of affordable housing; sets forth a five-year schedule for implementation of the Housing Element; and establishes a program for preserving assisted housing developments.

5. Public Services and Utilities Element

This element establishes goals, policies, and objectives for the provision of public services, including water supply, wastewater systems, storm drainage, waste management, utility services, emergency services, schools, libraries, and cultural facilities. One of the element's main features is the establishment of levels of service and concurrency requirements for public facilities and services.

6. Public Health and Safety Element

This element addresses fire safety, geologic and seismic hazards, flood hazards, noise, hazardous materials, air quality, aviation hazards, and highway safety.

7. Conservation and Open Space Element

This element provides for the conservation and protection of soils, mineral resources, water, wildlife and fisheries, vegetation, cultural resources, and other open space features.

8. Agriculture and Forestry Element

This element addresses the conservation, management, and utilization of the County's agricultural and forest lands.

9. Parks and Recreation Element

This element establishes goals and policies that address the long range provision and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities within the County.

10. Tahoe Basin Element

This element contains goals, objectives, and policies specific to the unique planning issues of the Tahoe Basin. Other County-wide policies within the General Plan also apply to review of projects within the Tahoe Basin.



## H. Description of the General Plan Alternative

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors has defined an alternative to the proposed project which is to be equally analyzed in the DEIR. The organizational format of this Alternative is identical to that of the Project Description. The primary differences between the General Plan Alternative and the Project Description are in density and types of land use designations, in policies contained within the different elements, and in the land use map. Following is an overview of the primary land use and mapping differences that are part of the General Plan Alternative.

### 1. Differences in the Land Use Designations

The land use designations in the Plan are modified as follows. Table II-1 contains a summary of these changes and comparisons with the Project Description.

*Rural Residential (RR):* The maximum density on this land use designation is 1 unit per 20 acres instead of 1 unit per 10 acres.

*Rural Residential Low Density (RRL):* This category is added in the Alternative. This designation is applied to large areas which are managed for resource uses, such as agriculture and grazing, and for lands which are remote and inaccessible. The density range for this designation is one unit per 40 to 160 acres or larger.

*Natural Resource (NR):* This designation will apply to river canyons, important watersheds, and other natural resource areas. The Project Description applies this designation only to forest lands and mineral resource lands. The maximum density is 40 acres along river canyons and 160 acres in forest lands.

### 2. Specific Land Use Map Changes

In addition to the modifications in the land use designations, the General Plan Alternative changes the land use designations for a number of specific areas within the County. Included in these areas are lands located south of U.S. Highway 50 and west of Latrobe Road, lands in the Bass Lake Road Area, and lands between Cool and Pilot Hill and Pilot Hill proper. Specific changes are as follows:

- a. The Apple Hill Agricultural District boundary extends south of U.S. Highway 50 in Camino.

- b. The community of Pilot Hill provides for lower residential densities and reduced commercially-designated lands.
- c. Properties zoned commercial and engaged in a commercial use located within Rural Regions are designated Commercial-Platted Lands (C-PL).
- d. The community of Nashville is identified as being part of the Rural Region and not a Rural Center.
- e. The property located at the southwest corner of U.S. Highway 50 and South Shingle Road is designated Low Density Residential (LDR) as opposed to Commercial (C).
- f. El Dorado Road, south of U.S. Highway 50, is designated Medium Density Residential (MDR) instead of Commercial (C).

Table II-2 illustrates which land use designations are consistent with the three main planning concept areas.

3. Policy Differences

In addition to the above differences, there are policy differences in each of the other elements of the General Plan Alternative. These differences are considered throughout this DEIR.



**TABLE II-1  
LAND USE DENSITIES BY LAND USE DESIGNATION**

<b>Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>General Plan Alternative</b>	<b>No Project Alternative</b>
Multi-Family Residential	5-24 DU/AC	7-24 DU/AC	Up to 20 DU/AC
High Density Residential	1-7 DU/AC	1-7 DU/AC	Up to 5 DU/AC
Medium-Density Residential	1-5 AC/DU	1-5 AC/DU	1.0-4.9 AC/DU
Low Density Residential	5-10 AC/DU	5-20 AC/DU	5.0-9.9 AC/DU
Rural Residential	10-40 AC/DU	20-40 AC/DU	10-160 AC/DU
Rural Residential - Low Density	Not in this Plan	40-160 AC/DU	Not in this Plan
Natural Resources	160 AC/DU	40-160 AC/DU	Not in this Plan
Commercial	10/4 <sup>1</sup>	4/1 <sup>1</sup>	With Special Use Permit only up to 20 DU/AC*

DU/AC—Dwelling units per acre  
AC/DU—Acres per dwelling unit

<sup>1</sup> For mixed use projects: Maximum residential units per acre in Community Regions/maximum residential units per acre in Rural Centers

**TABLE II-2  
PLANNING CONCEPT AREAS AND LAND USE DESIGNATION  
CONSISTENCY MATRIX**

Land Use Designation	Community Regions		Rural Centers		Rural Regions	
	PD	GPA	PD	GPA	PD	GPA
Multi-Family Residential	•	•	•	•		
High Density Residential	•	•	•	•		
Medium Density Residential	•	•	•	•		
Low Density Residential					•	•
Rural Residential					•	•
Rural Residential-Low Density						•
Natural Resource					•	•
Commercial	•	•	•	•		
Research & Development	•	•	•	•		
Industrial	•	•	•	•	•	•
Open Space	•	•	•	•	•	•
Public Facilities	•	•	•	•	•	•
PD = Project Description GPA = General Plan Alternative						



## **I. Description of the No Project Alternative**

The DEIR evaluates the impacts of a “No Project Alternative” which would be the continued use of the 24 *Area Plans* in combination with the other elements of the previously adopted *El Dorado County General Plan*. A small percentage of private County lands is not covered under one of the 24 *Area Plans*. Such areas consist of private properties within the Eldorado National Forest, the Tahoe Basin, Finnon, Volcanoville, and Gold Hill.

Land Use Designations for the No Project Alternative are shown in Table II-1.

## **J. Description of the Public Review Draft**

The Public Review Draft General Plan (PRDGP) currently serves as the operative interim General Plan for the County until such time as the County adopts a new General Plan. The PRDGP was developed pursuant to the requirements of the General Plan Time Extension issued by the State Office of Planning and Research.

The PRDGP is essentially a “hybrid” between the previously-described Project Description and General Plan Alternative and can be generally characterized as combining the text from the Project Description and the General Plan Alternative land use maps. The Land Use Element of the original Project Description text was modified to support the land use designations contained on the General Plan Alternative land use maps. The PRDGP land use map applies the same land use designations, with some exceptions, as provided on the General Plan Alternative land use maps.

The following are the basic differences in land use designations between the Project Description and the PRDGP. The Buildout potential of the PRDGP falls between the Project Description and General Plan Alternative.

1. The Apple Hill Agricultural District boundary extends south of U.S. Highway 50 in Camino.
2. The community of Pilot Hill provides for lower residential densities and reduced commercially-designated lands.
3. An 8,000-acre area, generally located south of the community of El Dorado and west of State Route 49, known as “Cinnabar” includes specific land use designations that allow the continued processing of the subdivision and rezoning.
4. Properties zoned commercial and engaged in a commercial use located within Rural Regions are designated Commercial-Platted Lands (C-PL).

5. The community of Nashville is identified as being part of the Rural Region and not a Rural Center.
6. El Dorado Road, south of U.S. Highway 50, is designated Medium Density Residential (MDR) instead of Commercial (C).

Since the PRDGP falls within the range of impacts between the two primary Plans, it will not be specifically analyzed in the DEIR. Because of its similarities to both Plans, it is a distinct alternative that could be selected as the base Plan to be adopted. If this occurs, additional environmental analysis would not be necessary unless other changes warrant re-evaluation.

### **III. SUMMARY OF IMPACTS**

Following is a list of impacts identified for the Project Description, General Plan Alternative, and No Project Alternative, and remaining impact following mitigation.



**TABLE III-1  
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS—GENERAL PLAN EIR**

Impact	Project Description	General Plan Alternative	No Project Alternative	After Mitigation
<b><i>LAND USE, POPULATION, AND GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS</i></b>				
Impact 1.3.1: Increase in Population Growth.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 1.3.2: Increase in Commercial and Industrial Growth Potential.	LTS	LTS	S	LTS
Impact 1.3.3: Density bonus policies in the Project Description could increase the development potential within the County.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 1.3.4: Land Use Compatibility.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 1.3.5: Alteration of Existing Patterns of Development.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 1.3.6: Development could result in non-contiguous development patterns and urban/suburban sprawl.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 1.3.7: Internal Inconsistency of Policies and Land Use Map.	S	LTS	S	LTS
Impact 1.3.8: Policies in the Project Description and/or General Plan Alternative may create impacts.	S	S	N/A	LTS
<b><i>EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING</i></b>				
Impact 2.2.1: Jobs/housing balance is less than 1.0.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 2.2.2: Loss of affordable housing units due to deterioration and blight.	S	S	S	LTS
<b><i>AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND OPEN SPACE</i></b>				
Impact 3.4.1: Choice farmlands are converted to non-agricultural uses or agricultural productivity of agricultural lands is impaired.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 3.4.2: Adjacent Land Uses Incompatible With Agricultural Production.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 3.4.3: Private forest lands are converted to non-forestry uses.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 3.4.4: Private forest lands are subject to adjacent incompatible land uses.	S	S	S	LTS

**TABLE III-1  
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS—GENERAL PLAN EIR**

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>General Plan Alternative</b>	<b>No Project Alternative</b>	<b>After Mitigation</b>
Impact 3.4.5: Conversion of open space into more intensive uses.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 3.4.6: Policies in General Plan would increase the level of impacts to open space lands.	S	NS	N/A	LTS
<b><i>PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE</i></b>				
Impact 4.2.1: Reduction in existing levels of fire protection.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 4.2.2: Additional residential development will occur in areas mapped as high or very high wildland fire hazard areas.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 4.2.3: Development under the Project Description and General Plan Alternative would require a substantial increase in the number of sworn officers assigned to patrol and investigative duties within the Sheriff's Department.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 4.2.4: Additional population accommodated by the General Plan will increase the demand on school districts for school facilities.	S	LTS	S	LTS
Impact 4.2.5: Population growth in El Dorado County will result in a substantial increase in the need for affordable, licensed child care facility space.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 4.2.6: Additional development accommodated by the Project Description will increase the demand on EID wastewater collection and treatment facilities.	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Impact 4.2.7: Development accommodated by the Project Description and Alternative General Plans will increase generation of solid waste.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 4.2.8: Additional residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural development within the County will increase the use, storage, manufacture, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.	LTS	LTS	LTS	N/A
Impact 4.2.9: Additional development could occur on lands contaminated by hazardous waste.	S	S	S	LTS



**TABLE III-1  
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS—GENERAL PLAN EIR**

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>General Plan Alternative</b>	<b>No Project Alternative</b>	<b>After Mitigation</b>
Impact 4.2.10: Additional development will create a need for expanded services from PG&E.	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Impact 4.2.11: Additional population in the County will affect planning for response to extraordinary situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and National Security Emergencies.	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
<b><i>WATER: RESOURCES, QUALITY, AND HAZARDS</i></b>				
Impact 5.2.1: Increase in demand for public water service, and reduction in existing service levels.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 5.2.2: Additional growth will occur in areas which are dependent on private wells for water, potentially affecting the quality and quantity of groundwater.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 5.2.3: Increase in surface water pollutants.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 5.2.4: Increase in groundwater pollutants.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 5.2.5: Additional development within the 100-year floodplain.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 5.2.6: Surface drainage from new development could increase the flood risk in developed areas.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 5.2.7: Critical or high occupancy structures could be located in areas subject to dam inundation.	S	S	S	LTS
<b><i>PARKS AND RECREATION</i></b>				
Impact 6.2.1: Insufficient parkland is available to achieve the standard of 5 acres/1,000 population of active parkland for the Cameron Park/El Dorado Hills areas and 3 acres/1,000 population for the remainder of the County.	S	S	S	SUI

**TABLE III-1  
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS—GENERAL PLAN EIR**

Impact	Project Description	General Plan Alternative	No Project Alternative	After Mitigation
Impact 6.2.2: Policies contained within the <i>Bikeway Master Plan, Management Plan, South Fork of the American River, and Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan</i> conflict with policies in the General Plan.	LTS	LTS	N/A	LTS
<b>SOILS, GEOLOGY, AND MINERAL RESOURCES</b>				
Impact 7.2.1: Increased development in areas potentially subject to seismic hazards.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 7.2.2: Additional development will result in substantial grading and construction activities in areas of known soil instability and steep slopes, resulting in accelerated erosion and sedimentation.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 7.2.3: Additional development could occur in areas with expansive soils.	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
Impact 7.2.4: Additional development could occur in areas subject to landslides.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 7.2.5: Additional development could occur in areas subject to avalanche hazards.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 7.2.6: Additional development could result in reduction of the amount of land available for mineral resource extraction.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 7.2.7: Existing and future mining operations could result in land use compatibility impacts with adjacent land uses, as well as environmental impacts on a range of resources.	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
<b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>				
Impact 8.2.1: Elimination, disturbance, or interruption of special status species as a direct or indirect result of development.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 8.2.2: Direct or indirect loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat and/or degradation of habitat values.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 8.2.3: Disruption of deer migration patterns and critical deer habitat.	S	S	S	SUI



**TABLE III-1**  
**SUMMARY OF IMPACTS—GENERAL PLAN EIR**

Impact	Project Description	General Plan Alternative	No Project Alternative	After Mitigation
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
Impact 9.2.1: Increase in Roadway LOS Deficiencies.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 9.2.2: Increase in Vehicle Miles Travelled and Average Trip Lengths.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 9.2.3: Increase in Average Daily Traffic Volumes.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 9.2.4: Increase in Required Road Sizes.	S	S	S	SUI
<b>AIR QUALITY</b>				
Impact 10.2.1: Increase in Short-Term Emissions.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 10.2.2: Increase in Long-Term Emissions.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 10.2.3: Increase in Toxic Air Emissions.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 10.2.4: Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 10.2.5: Conflict with Programs in APCD Air Quality Attainment Plan.	S	S	S	SUI
<b>NOISE</b>				
Impact 11.3.1: Increase in Traffic Noise.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 11.3.2: Increase in Noise Levels Due to Fixed or Non-transportation Noise Sources.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 11.3.3: Aircraft Noise at Proposed Noise-sensitive Land Uses.	S	S	S	LTS
Impact 11.4.4: Background Noise Levels Will Increase.	S	S	S	SUI

**TABLE III-1  
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS—GENERAL PLAN EIR**

<b>Impact</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>General Plan Alternative</b>	<b>No Project Alternative</b>	<b>After Mitigation</b>
<b><i>CULTURAL RESOURCES</i></b>				
Impact 12.2.1: Disturbance or destruction of prehistoric or historic sites, properties, or areas of ethnic significance, “important archaeological resources” as defined in Appendix K of the CEQA Guidelines and properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 12.2.2: Indirect impacts through an increase in human activity.	S	S	S	SUI
<b><i>VISUAL QUALITY</i></b>				
Impact 13.2.1: Physical changes of the existing rural/natural lands to a built (urban) land use pattern/form.	S	S	S	SUI
Impact 13.2.2: Introduction of light and glare into the newly established or expanded built (urban) communities.	S	S	S	SUI
SUI=Significant Unavoidable Impact; S=Significant; LTS=Less Than Significant; NS=Not Significant				



#### **IV. ASSUMPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT ESTIMATES**

##### **A. Residential Density and Building Intensity Assumptions**

The Project Description land use map uses 11 and the General Plan Alternative uses 12 land use designations to depict the uses allowed in the different areas of the unincorporated County. In addition to characterizing land use designations according to types of allowable uses, the General Plan must, according to State Law, specify standards of population density and building intensity for each land use designation. Standards of building intensity are explained in the Project Description in terms of 1) the allowable range of dwelling units per acre; 2) allowable floor area ratio (FAR); and 3) maximum impervious surface. Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses are stated in maximum floor area ratios (FARs). A floor area ratio is the ratio of the gross building square footage permitted on a lot to the net square footage of the lot. For example, on a site with 10,000 net square feet of land area, a FAR of 0.5 will allow 5,000 gross square feet of building floor area to be built regardless of the number of stories in the building (e.g., 2,500 square feet per floor on two floors, or 5,000 square feet on one floor). Maximum impervious surface is the percentage of the parcel acreage which can be covered by a surface through which water cannot penetrate such as a roof, road, sidewalk, or paved parking lot.

The General Plan Alternative land use designations differ from the Project Description in terms of allowable density. A comparison between the two Plans is shown in Table IV-1. Land use designations for the No Project Alternative are shown in Table IV-2.

**TABLE IV-1  
LAND USE DENSITIES BY LAND USE DESIGNATION  
PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE**

Land Use Designation	Residential Density Project Description	Residential Density General Plan Alternative	Persons Per Housing Unit	Floor Area Ratio	Maximum ** Impervious Surface in %
Multi-Family Residential	5-24 du/ac	5-24 du/ac	2.3		75 (75)
High Density Residential	1-7 du/ac	1-7 du/ac	2.8		75 (75)
Medium Density Residential	1-5 ac/du	1-5 ac/du	2.8		60 (30)
Low Density Residential	5-10 ac/du	5-20 ac/du	2.8		25 (25)
Rural Residential	10-40 ac/du	20-40 ac/du	2.8		10 (10)
Rural Residential-Low Density	Designation not in this Plan	40-160 ac/du	2.8		N/A (5)
Natural Resources	40-160 ac/du	40-160 ac/du	2.8		10 (5)
Commercial	10/4*	10/4*	2.8	0.25	85 (85)
Research & Development				0.20	50 (55)
Industrial				0.25	85 (85)
Open Space					
Public Facilities					

du/ac—dwellings units per acre; ac/du—acres per dwelling unit

\* For mixed use projects: Maximum residential units per acre in Community Regions/maximum residential units per acre in Rural Centers.

\*\* The number in parenthesis is for the General Plan Alternative.

**TABLE IV-2  
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS—NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Dwelling Units/Acre</b>	<b>Acres/Dwelling Unit</b>
Multi-Family Residential	3 to 20	
High Density Residential	1 to 5	
Medium Density Residential		1 to 5
Low Density Residential		5 to 10
Rural Residential		10 to 160

## **B. Geographic Areas of Analysis**

To facilitate analysis of the Project Description and Alternatives, a three-tiered geographic reference system described in Table IV-3 was developed. The first level is the Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ). These are groups of individual parcels sharing the same neighborhood, land use, and access route to a major street system. A total of 434 TAZs were identified on the Western Slope of the County. These TAZs are aggregated into 14 Market Areas. Each Market Area is comprised of two to 26 TAZs. The Market Areas are further aggregated into Regional Analysis Areas based on shared development and environmental characteristics and geographic proximity. These Regional Analysis Areas are used to organize the impacts analysis in this DEIR.



<b>TABLE IV-3 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF ANALYSIS</b>		
<b>Regional Analysis Areas</b>	<b>Market Areas</b>	<b>Cities/Towns/ Specific Plans</b>
1	1. El Dorado Hills	El Dorado Hills Specific Plan Northwest El Dorado Hills Specific Plan
	2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	
	3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	
	4. Placerville	City of Placerville
2	5. Coloma/Gold Hill	
3	6. Pollock Pines/Camino	
	7. Pleasant Valley	
4	8. Latrobe	
	9. Somerset/Fairplay	
2	10. Cool/Pilot Hill	
	11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	
6	12. Tahoe Basin	City of South Lake Tahoe Meyers Community Plan
5	13. American River Canyon/Forest	
	14. Mosquito	

### C. Growth Scenarios Used in General Plan EIR

This DEIR analyzes the impacts of growth and development in El Dorado County under the Project Description and Alternatives: a 20-year time frame to the year 2015, and a Buildout scenario for the Project Description, General Plan Alternative, and No Project Alternative. It is important to note that neither the Project Description nor the General Plan Alternative are intended to constrain the housing market or restrict overall growth to the year 2015. Each Plan does, however, shape the distribution of growth geographically. The scenarios evaluated in this DEIR are intended to communicate a general vision of the effects of the Project Description and Alternatives beyond 2015 to Buildout.

A 20-year time horizon is a reasonable benchmark for planning analyses. The full implications of Buildout will not be evident within the 20-year time period. The Buildout scenario enables the EIR to more fully consider and compare the long-term implications of the Project Description and the Alternatives. The impacts analyses are based on the 2015 time horizon and the Buildout scenarios.

Methodologies and assumptions utilized for determining 2015 and Buildout capacity are discussed at length in several sections of the DEIR.

Table IV-6 shows dwelling unit projections for 2015; Tables IV-9, IV-10 and IV-11 show residential Buildout in dwelling units by Market Area for the Project Description, General Plan Alternative, and No Project Alternative. Table IV-12 shows potential population at Buildout by Market Area for the Project Description, General Plan Alternative, and No Project Alternative.

It is determined that based on an extrapolation of 2015 market projections, it is expected that Buildout under the Project Description could theoretically be achieved by the year 2031. Under the General Plan Alternative, Buildout could theoretically be achieved by the year 2026 and No Project Buildout by the year 2035.

**TABLE IV-6**  
**YEAR 2015 PROJECTIONS FOR NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS BY RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS—PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Market Area	Land Use Designation (Density) <sup>1</sup>								
	<i>RURAL RESIDENTIAL (15 ac/u)</i>			<i>LOW DENSITY (7.0 ac/u)</i>			<i>MEDIUM DENSITY (2.0 ac/u)</i>		
	<i>Supply</i>	<i>% Used</i>	<i>Allocation</i>	<i>Supply</i>	<i>% Used</i>	<i>Allocation</i>	<i>Supply</i>	<i>% Used</i>	<i>Allocation</i>
1. El Dorado Hills	0	0	0	870	52	451	650	72	467
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	86	64	55	1,946	64	1,252	1,382	67	927
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	852	95	813	448	67	301	1,572	60	949
4. Placerville	342	90	308	385	68	260	489	47	231
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	736	48	355	727	84	611	150	84	69
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	111	45	50	771	56	435	553	93	516
7. Pleasant Valley	501	72	362	1,247	57	711	425	42	177
8. Latrobe	1,400	32	451	1,219	28	342	0	0	0
9. Somerset/Fairplay	2,027	19	377	16	99	981	62	63	39
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	926	54	502	1,030	39	405	1,700	50	851
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	1,773	53	931	1,313	75	981	1,014	40	407
12. Tahoe Basin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13. American River Canyon	0	0	0	149	29	44	234	18	41
14. Mosquito	148	55	81	216	26	55	1,136	15	175
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,903</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>4,285</b>	<b>10,337</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>5,864</b>	<b>9,367</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>4,849</b>

<sup>1</sup> Density calculated using Long Range Planning achievable density assumptions.  
ac/u = acres per unit; u/ac = units per acre



TABLE IV-6

## YEAR 2015 PROJECTIONS FOR NUMBER OF DWELLING UNITS BY RESIDENTIAL LAND USE DESIGNATIONS—PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Market Area	Land Use Designation (Density) <sup>1</sup>								
	HIGH DENSITY (2.5 u/ac)			MULTI-FAMILY (12 u/ac)			TOTAL UNITS		
	Supply	% Used	Allocation	Supply	% Used	Allocation	Supply	% Used	Allocation
1. El Dorado Hills	19,342	50	9,601	3,888	44	1,698	24,750	49	12,217
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	10,658	41	4,378	5,712	40	2,302	19,784	45	8,914
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	1,456	6	83	7,054	36	2,567	11,383	41	4,713
4. Placerville	4,809	47	2,242	3,454	57	1,985	9,479	53	5,026
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	63	57	36	0	0	0	1,676	64	1,071
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	3,297	44	1,448	2,340	19	442	7,073	41	2,891
7. Pleasant Valley	572	53	305	138	0	0	2,884	54	1,555
8. Latrobe	50	60	30	0	0	0	2,669	31	823
9. Somerset/Fairplay	196	45	89	0	0	0	23,00	23	521
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	1,055	17	178	784	12	94	5,495	37	2,030
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	1	0	0	312	30	94	4,412	55	2,413
12. Tahoe Basin	1,899	100	1,899	384	100	384	2,283	100	2,282
13. American River Canyon	1,132	21	234	24	79	19	338	22	41
14. Mosquito	18	0	0	0	0	0	311	20	175
<b>TOTAL</b>	44,548	46	20,523	24,090	40	9,585	97,245	46	45,106

<sup>1</sup> Density calculated using Long Range Planning achievable density assumptions.  
ac/u = acres per unit; u/ac = units per acre

**TABLE IV-9**  
**RESIDENTIAL BUILDOUT BY MARKET AREA IN DWELLING UNITS—PROJECT DESCRIPTION<sup>1</sup>**

Market Area	Land Use Designation (Density) <sup>2</sup>						
	<i>MFR</i>	<i>HDR</i>	<i>HDR-PL</i>	<i>MDR</i>	<i>MDR-PL</i>	<i>LDR</i>	<i>LDR-PL</i>
1. El Dorado Hills	3,912	20,010	0	818	0	1,127	0
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	6,600	10,962	0	1,968	0	3,141	0
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	7,140	2,680	0	1,658	350	652	212
4. Placerville	3,468	5,128	0	1,216	150	591	34
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	0	70	0	227	120	1,461	109
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	2,508	3,553	500	1,299	228	825	23
7. Pleasant Valley	144	600	0	914	65	1,840	125
8. Latrobe	0	50	0	0	0	1,267	0
9. Somerset/Fairplay	0	85	125	68	0	388	406
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	792	1,313	0	2,134	0	1,308	0
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	312	50	0	1,407	160	1,032	778
12. Tahoe Basin	8,760	20,613	0	198	0	8	0
13. American River Canyon	24	1,248	0	264	20	94	135
14. Mosquito	0	0	50	21	1,220	18	207
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33,600</b>	<b>66,364</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>12,192</b>	<b>2,313</b>	<b>13,752</b>	<b>2,029</b>

Source: El Dorado County Planning Department, 1994  
Achievable density based on Table IV-8.

<sup>1</sup> This table represents the total acreage in each Market Area in each residential land use designation.

**TABLE IV-9**  
**RESIDENTIAL BUILDOUT BY MARKET AREA IN DWELLING UNITS—PROJECT DESCRIPTION<sup>1</sup>**

Market Area	Land Use Designation (Density)				
	<i>RR</i>	<i>RR-A</i>	<i>RR-PL</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>POTENTIAL POPULATION<sup>2</sup></i>
1. El Dorado Hills	15	0	0	25,882	68,846
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	284	0	0	22,955	61,060
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	880	59	0	13,631	36,258
4. Placerville	229	230	0	11,046	29,382
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	365	379	0	2,731	7,264
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	71	188	0	9,195	24,459
7. Pleasant Valley	522	189	33	4,432	11,789
8. Latrobe	1,539	0	0	2,856	7,597
9. Somerset/Fairplay	765	1,414	7	3,258	8,666
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	1,022	0	0	6,569	17,474
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	1,512	714	0	5,965	15,867
12. Tahoe Basin	6	0	0	29,585	78,696
13. American River Canyon	12	26	26	1,849	4,918
14. Mosquito	190	0	0	1,706	4,538
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,412</b>	<b>3,199</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>141,660</b>	<b>376,816</b>

Source: El Dorado County Planning Department, 1994.  
Achievable density based on Table IV-8.

<sup>1</sup> This table represents the total acreage in each Market Area in each residential land use designation.

<sup>2</sup> Based on 2.66 persons per dwelling unit; numbers rounded off.



**TABLE IV-10**  
**RESIDENTIAL BUILDOUT BY MARKET AREA IN DWELLING UNITS—GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE<sup>1</sup>**

Market Area	Land Use Designation (Density)								
	<i>MFR</i>	<i>HDR</i>	<i>HDR-PL</i>	<i>MDR</i>	<i>MDR-PL</i>	<i>LDR</i>	<i>LDR-PL</i>	<i>RR</i>	<i>LDR-A</i>
1. El Dorado Hills	3,192	19,260	0	698	0	1,067	0	2	0
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	5,880	9,575	0	1,738	0	2,885	0	124	0
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	7,140	2,680	0	1,652	140	574	75	140	17
4. Placerville	3,468	5,128	0	1,224	60	520	12	42	8
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	0	70	0	227	48	1,299	39	91	86
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	2,508	3,153	360	839	147	637	8	20	132
7. Pleasant Valley	144	0	240	149	318	1,617	47	185	87
8. Latrobe	0	50	0	0	0	1,119	0	229	0
9. Somerset/Fairplay	0	85	50	68	0	341	143	41	468
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	648	1,050	0	1,979	0	994	0	376	0
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	312	50	0	1,407	64	908	274	516	284
12. Tahoe Basin	8,760	19,913	280	198	0	7	0	4	0
13. American River Canyon	24	1,248	0	264	8	83	48	7	2
14. Mosquito	0	0	20	21	488	16	73	6	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	32,076	62,260	950	10,463	1,273	12,066	718	1,782	1,083

Source: El Dorado County Planning Department, 1994

Achievable density based on Table IV-8.

<sup>1</sup> This table represents an approximation of the total number of dwelling units in each land use designation and Market Area.

**TABLE IV-10  
RESIDENTIAL BUILDOUT BY MARKET AREA IN DWELLING UNITS—GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE<sup>1</sup>**

Market Area	Land Use Designation (Density)					
	<i>RR-A</i>	<i>RR-PL</i>	<i>RRL</i>	<i>RRL-A</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>POTENTIAL POPULATION<sup>2</sup></i>
1. El Dorado Hills	0	0	2	0	24,220	64,425
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	0	0	15	0	20,217	53,777
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	26	0	103	0	12,545	33,370
4. Placerville	135	0	0	0	10,596	28,185
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	178	0	27	0	2,064	5,490
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	103	0	0	0	7,908	21,035
7. Pleasant Valley	62	13	0	0	2,862	7,613
8. Latrobe	0	0	193	0	1,590	4,230
9. Somerset/Fairplay	503	3	37	22	1,765	4,695
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	0	0	69	0	5,115	13,606
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	237	0	82	8	4,144	11,023
12. Tahoe Basin	0	0	0	0	29,161	77,568
13. American River Canyon	14	10	0	0	1,707	4,541
14. Mosquito	0	0	0	0	624	1,660
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,257	25	526	30	124,518	331,218

Source: El Dorado County Planning Department, 1994  
Achievable density based on Table IV-8.

<sup>1</sup> This table represents an approximation of the total number of dwelling units in each land use designation and Market Area.

<sup>2</sup> Based on 2.66 persons per dwelling unit; numbers rounded off.

**TABLE IV-11  
RESIDENTIAL BUILDOUT BY MARKET AREA IN DWELLING UNITS—NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

Market Area	Land Use Designation (Density)					
	<i>RR (15 ac/du)</i>	<i>LDR (7.5 ac/du)</i>	<i>MDR (2.5 ac/du)</i>	<i>HDR (3 du/ac)</i>	<i>MF (12 du/ac)</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
1. El Dorado Hills	2,322	430	1,282	10,828	2,252	17,114
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	411	2,536	1,737	12,055	4,634	21,373
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	1,749	906	1,143	5,156	3,818	12,772
4. Placerville	691	975	1,387	2,348	1,392	6,793
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	959	1,350	318	2,554	356	5,537
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	1,510	312	2,632	3,405	888	8,747
7. Pleasant Valley	651	1,144	1,115	1,603	1,086	5,599
8. Latrobe	1,113	1,486	1,587	5,053	5,598	14,837
9. Somerset/Fairplay	2,445	1,849	155	725	1,286	6,460
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	1,309	829	1,806	1,880	1,056	6,880
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	2,684	1,178	3,317	343	1,007	8,529
12. Tahoe Basin	82	5	10	28,308	2,844	31,249
13. American River Canyon	1,895	731	620	10,745	36	14,027
14. Mosquito	605	481	50	1,748	0	2,884
<b>TOTAL</b>	18,427	14,210	17,156	86,748	26,252	162,801



**TABLE IV-12  
BUILDOUT POPULATION BY MARKET AREA—PROJECT DESCRIPTION,  
GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE, AND NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

<b>Market Area</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>General Plan Alternative</b>	<b>No Project Alternative</b>
1. El Dorado Hills	68,846	64,425	45,523
2. Shingle Springs/Cameron Park	61,060	53,777	56,852
3. Diamond Springs/El Dorado	36,258	33,370	33,974
4. Placerville <sup>1</sup>	29,382	28,185	18,069
5. Coloma/Gold Hill	7,264	5,490	14,728
6. Pollock Pines/Camino	24,459	21,035	23,267
7. Pleasant Valley	11,789	7,613	14,893
8. Latrobe	7,597	4,230	39,466
9. Somerset/Fairplay	8,666	4,695	17,184
10. Cool/Pilot Hill	17,474	13,606	18,301
11. Georgetown/Garden Valley	15,867	11,023	22,687
12. Tahoe Basin <sup>1</sup>	78,696	77,568	83,122
13. American River Canyon/Forest	4,918	4,541	37,312
14. Mosquito	4,538	1,660	7,671
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>376,814</b>	<b>331,218</b>	<b>433,049</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes Cities of Placerville and South Lake Tahoe.

## V. IMPACTS ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### A. Land Use, Population, and Growth-Inducing Impacts

Eight separate impacts are identified and analyzed under this section of the DEIR. Below is a summary of the impact analyses, significance conclusions, and mitigation measures.

Impact 1.3.1: Increase in Population Growth. Market demand and forecast supply for 2015 are discussed at length, with a statement of a “rule of thumb” that supply should generally be around 150 percent of the anticipated demand. Table V-1-6 in the DEIR text illustrates supply, allocation, and the percent of allocation supplied for each Market Area. It is determined that in many instances, the actual supply of land is in excess or far in excess of the 150 percent of demand figure generally used. The effects of this overstatement are discussed, along with policies currently in the Project Description which would aid in mitigating the impact through phasing and concurrency requirements.

Analysis of this impact determined that residential growth beyond the existing population (125,995 in 1990) would increase substantially for the Project Description (approximately 94,000 units and a population of 250,000), with the greatest increase occurring in Regional Analysis Area 1 (El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park/Shingle Springs, Diamond Springs/El Dorado, and Placerville Market Areas). This impact is considered significant for the Project Description. The General Plan Alternative would provide approximately 16,000 fewer units and 43,800 fewer residents. However, this impact is still considered significant for the General Plan Alternative. Growth under the No Project Alternative would be approximately 18,000 units greater than the Project Description (with a total population of approximately 299,000) and is therefore considered a significant impact. Mitigation measures for the related impacts attributed to the increase in residential growth potential are discussed below.

Impact 1.3.2: Increase in Commercial and Industrial Growth Potential. Increases in commercial and industrial lands would occur in the Project Description, primarily in the Community Regions. Potentially significant environmental effects could result from this increase in acreage on community noise levels, air quality, visual resources, etc. However, expansion of employment opportunities with this growth is viewed as a positive impact. The impact of providing these land use designations is considered less than significant as they are needed to serve the population and improve the jobs/housing balance.

Under the General Plan Alternative, approximately 300 acres less commercial and industrial land is identified. Although potentially significant impacts could occur as these lands are developed, this impact is also viewed as a positive impact in terms of employment growth opportunities. The impact is determined to be less than significant.

With somewhat fewer acres in commercial and industrial than the Project Description and General Plan Alternative, the No Project Alternative would result in fewer impacts. However, the impact is determined to be significant as it will under realize the jobs/housing potential of the other two Plans.

It is determined that there are no specific mitigation measures available. Mitigation measures added under Impact 1.3.4 will aid in reducing the impact of additional commercial and industrial land.

Impact 1.3.3: Density Bonus Policies in the Project Description could increase the development potential within the County. The density bonus program was created with several purposes in mind:

- a) To encourage clustering in order to retain continuous permanent natural space.
- b) As an incentive to avoid on-site constraints due to the presence of environmentally-sensitive lands.
- c) To both encourage and provide public benefits.
- d) To minimize conflicts to surrounding lands (e.g., agricultural and forestry uses).
- e) To maintain openness and a rural character.
- f) To maintain or create greater defensible space for the urban/wildland interface.

Based on an analysis of the policies in the Project Description and General Plan Alternative (see Table V-1-9 in the DEIR), it is determined that the potential 100 percent increase in density could result in additional impacts to traffic circulation, schools, air quality, noise, wildlife and plant habitat, surrounding land uses, parks and recreation and other facilities. This impact would occur at Buildout rather than 2015 where market forces will control the total number of units. It is determined that this impact would be considered potentially significant in that the holding capacity of the General Plan would be increased by an unknown factor and the related impacts exacerbated. In addition, second residential units would be allowed by right in all single family residential designations in Rural Regions,



Rural Centers and Community Regions. Impacts to the year 2015 would not be considered significant as market forces would limit total units constructed. Localized impacts would be common.

Under the General Plan Alternative policies, density could be increased a maximum of 25 percent, an increase less than that possible under the Project Description. Second residential units would require a special use permit in Community Regions and Rural Centers. The impact is still considered potentially significant under this Alternative due to the potential increase in density at Buildout.

Although no body of policies exist in the No Project Alternative concerning density bonuses, second residential units are allowed by right in all residential zoning districts unless prohibited by CC&Rs. This policy could double the density under this Alternative and is therefore considered potentially significant.

It is determined that the following mitigation measure will reduce the impact to a less than significant level: replacing Policy 2.2.3.18 of the Project Description to limit the maximum density to 25 percent over the base density established by zoning, allowing an additional unit for each land unit over 30 percent dedicated to open space, and one additional unit for each 100 acres dedicated to permanent open space and a five percent bonus for trail construction.

Impact 1.3.4. Land Use Compatibility. This impact analyzes the potential incompatibility of uses that may cause noise, odors, public access, traffic, and lighting impacts. Such uses include commercial, industrial, family support uses, schools, public facilities, agricultural operations, timber harvesting, recreational uses, mining, etc. Potential conflicts for some of the uses are addressed through the inclusion of development standards, which will presumably be included in the Zoning Ordinance update. Other uses are regulated through the special use permit process. Potential impacts from incompatible uses were identified for all Regional Analysis Areas except the Tahoe Basin, and the impacts are determined to be potentially significant for the Project Description.

Incompatibility issues for the General Plan Alternative were determined to be less than the Project Description in several areas: lower densities in Rural Residential and Rural Residential Low Density designations; lower densities in Pilot Hill; incorporation of additional types of resources into the Natural Resource Designation, including river canyons, watershed areas, deer migration corridors and rare and endangered species habitat. Also, Neighborhood Service zoning in new residential projects would have to be pre-designated so that incompatibility issues could be identified early and hopefully overcome in the planning process. Despite a lessening of the impact, incompatibility issues are determined to be potentially significant for this Alternative as well.

This impact is considered significant under the No Project Alternative as this Alternative does not provide distinct Community Regions, Agricultural Districts, Natural Resource lands or the Platted Lands designations, thereby increasing the potential for incompatibility conflicts.

Mitigation for this impact is contained in many policies of the Project Description. It is determined that additional mitigation would reduce the impact to a less than significant level: include the use of the Rural Residential and Natural Resources designations and inclusion of the Rural Residential Low Density land use designations as used in the General Plan Alternative; usage of distinct densities and development for Recreational Vehicle parks and campgrounds (allowed only in Rural Regions) in non-commercial zoning districts; inclusion in the Zoning Ordinance of criteria for locating churches and schools in residential zone districts; and inclusion of standards in the Zoning Ordinance to be applied when incompatible uses are located next to each other.

Impact 1.3.5: Alteration of Existing Patterns of Development. It is determined that development consistent with the Project Description would result in changes in existing development patterns. In addition, expansion of Low Density Residential lands beyond the existing Area Plans and establishment of Rural Residential-10 acre minimums throughout the balance of Rural Regions will reaffirm the land use patterns of the Area Plans and significantly impact the existing road system. An expansion of urbanized land use would also occur in the designated Rural Centers. A table appearing in Appendix B of the DEIR identifies expansion of the following Rural Centers: Cool, Pilot Hill, Georgetown, Kelsey, Lotus, Somerset and Gray's Corner.

The alteration of land use patterns would occur primarily in Regional Analysis Area 1 when large tracts of land are converted into urban uses such as the three Planned Communities in the El Dorado Hills Market Area and the Bass Lake Road area. Changes in development patterns would also occur in the Diamond Springs/El Dorado Market Area. Within Regional Analysis Area 2, the existing pattern of rural residential development would be changed to Medium and High Density Residential in the Pilot Hill Rural Center. Expansion of 5 to 10 acre rural residential development within Regional Analysis Areas 3 and 4 would affect the land use patterns within these regions. Overall, this impact is considered significant for the Project Description.

Development patterns would intensify and shift under the General Plan Alternative in a manner similar to the Project Description. An exception would be the increase in community separation under this Alternative. The Rural Residential, Rural Residential Low Density, and Natural Resource designations would reduce the level of impact to existing rural residential land use patterns.



In addition, the Pilot Hill Rural Center is maintained in a smaller geographical area. Although the impact is less than under the Project Description, it is still considered significant primarily due to the intensification of land uses in the Community Regions.

Under the No Project Alternative, the impacts are determined to be similar to the Project Description and therefore significant. This impact would be intensified due to the absence of the Natural Resource designation on private timber and some agricultural lands.

This impact is partially reduced by policies in the Project Description. An additional measure includes utilization of the Rural Residential Low Density land use designation. However, it is determined that the proposed mitigation measures will not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

Impact 1.3.6: Development could result in non-contiguous development patterns and urban/suburban sprawl. It is determined that the potential exists for non-contiguous development patterns under the Project Description due to the amount of undeveloped land within the Community Regions (El Dorado Hills and Diamond Springs/El Dorado in particular) and the timing of development. In addition, in the more rural areas of the County, clusters of urban-type development could potentially be created using a combination of the density bonus program and planned development zoning. It is determined that the potential for urban sprawl along the U.S. Highway 50 corridor exists due to a possible continuous urban development pattern from Sacramento east to Shingle Springs. The same potential also exists in the Diamond Springs/El Dorado area. This impact is considered significant for the Project Description.

Lessening of density within the General Plan Alternative would reduce the potential for non-contiguous development patterns. The more restrictive density bonus program would reduce the number of residential units located distant from Community Regions. The lower density designations in this Alternative would also provide for greater separation of communities. Although the magnitude of the impact is reduced under this Alternative, it is still considered significant.

The potential for non-contiguous development patterns under the No Project Alternative is considered greater than under the Project Description particularly due to the lack of concentrated Community Regions. A potential for community merging also exists under this Alternative. The impact is considered significant for this Alternative.

Partial mitigation of this impact is provided within policies contained in the Project Description. Additional mitigation includes: measures designed to maintain the separation of communities and precluding strip commercial development; designation of the foreground viewshed of U.S. Highway 50 to



provide separation of the communities of El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park; and designation of lands in the Pilot Hill Rural Center to preclude the encroachment of urban scale uses into rural lands on the east side of State Route 49. However, it is determined that this impact would not be reduced to a less than significant level.

Impact 1.3.7: Internal Inconsistency of Policies and Land Use Map. It is determined that certain inconsistencies exist between the Project Description land use map and the Project Description goals and policies document. Specifically, commercial designations are shown outside Community Regions and Rural Centers, contrary to Policy 2.2.1.1; the boundaries of the Placerville Community Region extend outside the City of Placerville's Sphere of Influence, inconsistent with Policy 2.2.1.1; the density bonus Policy 2.2.3.18 is potentially inconsistent with Policy 2.2.1.2 in that it allows land use densities to double the base land use designation; and commercial land use is not shown in the Sierra Springs area, conflicting with policies created to reduce reliance on the automobile. These impacts are considered significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative a number of differences occur: existing commercial land uses are designated with the Platted Lands overlay outside Community Regions and Rural Centers and other areas are designated residential and the density bonus program is more restrictive. The impact is considered less than significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, it is noted that inconsistencies exist between the Area Plans and between the policy documents and land use maps. The impact is considered significant for this Alternative.

It is determined that implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a less than significant level: redesignation of commercial areas outside Community Regions and Rural Centers to a non-commercial designation; modification of the boundaries of the Placerville Community Region to conform to the boundaries of the Placerville Sphere of Influence; modification of the density bonus policy; and creation of a Rural Center near the entrance to Sierra Springs (to allow for some commercial uses).

Impact 1.3.8: Policies in the Project Description and/or General Plan Alternative may create impacts. The following policies are determined to be potentially impacting:

- a. Policy 2.2.3.3 of the Project Description concerns the Planned Development Combining Zone District. This policy provides negotiable features rather than specific standards to guide development.

- b. Policy 2.2.3.8 of the Project Description concerns giving commercial uses a permitted use status in Neighborhood Service Zones. This could result in the approval of zoning which creates potential impacts.
- c. Policy 2.9.1.1 of both the Project Description and the General Plan Alternative provides guidelines for conducting home occupations in Community Regions, Rural Centers, and Rural Regions. Impacts could be created in neighborhoods due to the relatively loose standards. Both, however, recognize the benefits of working at home and the associated positive reduction in vehicle miles traveled.
- e. Concerns policies relating to clustering of residential development near public facilities (Policies 2.2.3.17 [PD], 2.2.3.18 [GPA], 2.2.3.3 [PD] and 2.2.3.4 [GPA]).

It is determined that the potential impacts will be reduced to a less than significant level with the following mitigation measures: replacing Policy 2.2.3.3 of the Project Description with Policy 2.2.3.4 of the General Plan Alternative and the addition of language that would preclude clustering adjacent to public facilities; modification of Policy 2.2.3.8 to add requirement for pre-designation of Neighborhood Services zones; and modification of home occupation policy.

## **B. Employment and Housing**

Two impacts are analyzed in this section. Below is a summary of the impacts analysis and mitigation measures.

Impact 2.2.1: Jobs/housing balance is less than 1.0. It is stated that a significant impact would occur if the balance starts in a downward trend, indicating that more employees are commuting outside the County to their jobs or in an upward trend, indicating that more out-of-County employees are commuting to jobs in the County. For the Project Description, a total of 7,235 acres of Commercial and Industrial designated lands are proposed. Development of any amount of this acreage in combination with policies in the General Plan encouraging this type of development would serve to move the balance into an upward trend. Since the ratio is less than 1.0, the impact is determined to be significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, a total of 6,908 acres is designated with Commercial and Industrial land uses. Although it is approximately 300 acres less than the Project Description, it is determined that the smaller amount of acreage would not substantially affect the ability to move the balance in an upward trend. Since the ratio is less than 1.0, the impact is considered significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, a total of 6,561 acres of Commercial and Industrial designated land is shown, a reduction of 674 from the Project Description. It is determined that this reduction would have a negative effect on the jobs/housing balance in the County and would maintain the County as primarily an exporter of labor.

A number of policies in the Project Description are determined to improve the impact to the jobs/housing balance. The following additional mitigation measures would help mitigate the impact: monitoring of jobs to housing ratio every two (2) years, with development of active program to increase County jobs if the projections are not met; establishment of incentive programs to expand the industrial manufacturing base, including property tax abatement, impact fee waivers and deferment, sales and use tax exemption and training incentives; requirement on mixed-use projects that the residential component either follow or be concurrent with development of the commercial component; and continued work with the Sierra Economic Development District to identify strategies to reduce barriers to business.

It is determined that the above mitigation measures will not reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

Impact 2.2.2: Loss of affordable housing units due to deterioration and blight. It is stated that rapid growth in the 1970s transformed the County from rural into one that increasingly serves as a “bedroom” community to Sacramento. As a result, a lower demand for older housing has occurred, reducing the prices/rents on these housing units. This reduction can indirectly cause the deterioration of these housing units and blighted conditions, which is considered a significant impact under the Project Description and both Alternatives. Policies in the Project Description are determined to reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

### **C. Agriculture, Forestry, and Open Space**

Impacts in this section are analyzed as follows: two impacts are analyzed in the Agriculture section, two in the Forestry section, and two in the Open Space Section. Below is a summary of all impacts considered.



Impact 3.4.1: Choice Farmlands are converted to non-agricultural uses or agricultural productivity of agricultural lands is impaired. A determination is made that a significant impact would occur under the Project Description due to the potential conversion of choice farmlands (prime, statewide important and unique, and farmland of local importance) to non-agricultural uses. These conversions would occur primarily in Regional Analysis Areas 1, 2 and 3 (specifically, the Bass Lake Hills Specific Plan area, Planned Communities 2 and 3 in the El Dorado Hills Market Area, in the Diamond Springs/El Dorado Community Area, Pilot Hill area, Cool Rural Center, and some areas of the Pollock Pines/Camino and Pleasant Valley Market Areas).

Under the General Plan Alternative, impacts to choice farmlands within Regional Analysis Areas 1 and 2 are basically the same. In Regional Analysis Area 3, a few areas in the Pleasant Valley Market Area are changed from Rural Residential-Agriculture to Low Density Residential-Agriculture increasing the potential for impacts. This impact is considered potentially significant for the General Plan Alternative.

Impacts under the No Project Alternative are determined to be generally the same as for the Project Description. However, they may be somewhat more impacting due to the higher densities in some areas of choice soils and the absence of Agricultural Districts and related policies.

It is determined that policies in the Project Description would partially mitigate impacts to choice farmlands. The following additional mitigation measures would reduce the impacts to a less than significant level: expansion of Agricultural District overlay to include all areas of choice soils where feasible or zoning such lands a minimum of 20 acres within Rural Regions if not in conflict with agricultural uses; evaluation of choice farmland within Rural Centers of Cool/Pilot Hill, Planned Communities 2 and 3 and Diamond Springs/El Dorado to determine if these lands are needed for urban uses within the Plan period, with review to be conducted by the Agricultural Commission; providing a land use designation with 40-acre minimum appropriate for grazing and rangelands and where existing parcel sizes and landholdings are large; voluntary transfer of development rights program to preserve choice soils to be provided in the Zoning Ordinance; further subdivision of Williamson Act contract lands only upon satisfaction of all four criteria for entering into a contract; precluding of public buildings on lands with choice agricultural soils unless there is an overwhelming public benefit and use is properly buffered from agricultural operations; and a policy on lands suitable for grazing.

Impact 3.4.2: Adjacent Land Uses Incompatible With Agricultural Production. It is determined that this impact is potentially significant for the Project Description. The issue of incompatibility would occur when agricultural activities are adjacent to residential or institutional uses such as schools, hospitals or day

care centers, resulting in complaints of noise, overspray, odors and traffic. Incompatibility impacts were noted in all of the Regional Analysis Areas due to Williamson Act contract lands adjacent to residential uses and/or designated communities/City limits.

Under the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative, incompatibility impacts are also identified, particularly with agricultural preserves adjacent to low density residential and higher density lands. This impact is considered to be potentially significant for both the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative.

It is determined that policies from the Project Description would partially mitigate incompatibility impacts and that additional mitigation, as follows, will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Mitigation includes the modification of Policy 8.1.3.1 to require a 20 acre minimum buffer up against grazing lands; requirement that all Low Density Residential lands adjacent to Williamson Act Contract lands be zoned 10-acre minimum; revision of the Right-to-Farm Ordinance to include a provision for placing a deed restriction on new parcels created adjacent to Agricultural Districts, acknowledging that they are adjacent to a parcel engaging in agricultural activities; requirement for 200 foot width setback to buffer agricultural from non-agricultural uses; restriction of lot sizes for clustered parcels at 5 acres minimum and requirement for 10-acre minimum parcel buffer against contiguous lands zoned for agriculture or within the Agricultural District Overlay; requirement of 400 foot non-use buffers between new schools and agricultural operations; and requirement on special use permits for institutional and extended family support uses found to be compatible in residential neighborhoods to make a finding that there is no conflict when located within or adjacent to an Agricultural District overlay area.

Impact 3.4.3: Private forest lands are converted to non-forestry uses. It is determined that conversion of forest lands to non-forestry uses is potentially significant for the Project Description. This impact is partially attributed to subdivision of parcels into such small units that the continued production and harvesting of forest resources is not economically viable. Conversion impacts were primarily identified in the Pollock Pines/Camino Market Area and Somerset/Fairplay Market Area.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the major difference lies with the Natural Resource designation which is used more frequently on the Alternative maps. Use of this designation would keep in production the larger, more economically viable parcels.

Under the No Project Alternative, the impact would potentially be greater than the Project Description because of the lack of a Natural Resource designation on timberlands. The Rural Residential designation currently on the land use maps would potentially allow subdivision into 10-acre parcels. Impacts to forest resources are considered potentially significant for both Alternatives.

Impacts would be partially mitigated by policies within the Project Description. The impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of the following mitigation measures: evaluation of all discretionary projects for the potential of choice timber soil; modification of Natural Resource designation description to eliminate dwelling units as a use allowed by right in commercial timber areas; and retention of Natural Resource designation on all identified timberlands below the 3,000 foot elevation.

Impact 3.4.4: Private forest lands are subject to adjacent incompatible land uses. Potential conflicts would arise when areas being harvested for timber resources are located adjacent to residential uses. Incompatibility impacts were noted in Regional Analysis Areas 1 (in the Placerville Market Area), 2 (in the Georgetown/Garden Valley Market Area), 3 (in the Pollock Pines/Camino Market Area) and in 5 (in the American River Canyon/Forest and Mosquito Market Areas). This impact is determined to be potentially significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative, the impacts would be similar and therefore considered potentially significant.

This impact would be partially mitigated by two policies within the Project Description. The impacts would be mitigated to a less than significant level with the following additional measures: 40 acre minimum buffer on parcels outside Forest Service boundary and below 3,000 feet that are within and adjacent to Natural Resource and Timber Production Zone lands; designation of all lands adjacent to Timberland Production Zones Rural Residential Low Density and zoning them 40-acre minimum; requirement that all forest resource lands with woodland suitability ratings of Class I, II or II be considered for inclusion in the Natural Resource designation.

Impact 3.4.5: Conversion of open space into more intensive uses. Conversion of open space lands is determined to be a potential under the Project Description, in part due to the characterization of the Rural Residential (with 10-acre minimum parcels sizes) and Natural Resource (concerning only those lands with economic extractive value) land use designations. Further conversion could occur with the roll out of agricultural and timber preserves and the urbanization of Rural Residential lands. In addition, minimum standards for open space in Planned Communities are not clearly defined. Impacts are identified in several of the Regional Analysis Areas. Regional Analysis Area 1 contains a large tract of land



which has been designated as Planned Community 1. In addition, a large area in the Latrobe Market Area has been redesignated from Rural Residential to Low Density Residential in the Project Description. In Regional Analysis Area 2 some conversion occurs through the roll-out of an agricultural preserve and the redesignation of some Rural Residential lands to Low Density Residential. In Regional Analysis Area 3, river canyons are designated Rural Residential, potentially subjecting these areas to a greater intensity of land use. This impact is considered potentially significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, this impact may be lessened due to the lower intensities provided in the Rural Residential and Rural Residential Low Density land use designations. Additionally, a fifth rare plant preserve is designated in this Alternative, which would provide additional open space lands. However, even though the impacts would be lessened under this Alternative, there would still occur a considerable amount of open space conversion and therefore the impact is determined to be potentially significant.

Under the No Project Alternative, the designations of Open Space and Exclusive Agriculture would aid in maintaining areas of open space. However, the Rural Residential lands occupying many areas of the County would be subject to division into 10-acre parcels, thus potentially fragmenting existing open space lands. The impact would be considered potentially significant for this Alternative.

Impacts would be partially mitigated through policies contained in the Project Description. It is determined that although the following additional mitigation measures would aid in reducing impacts due to open space conversion, the impact would not be fully mitigated. Additional mitigation measures include: integration of open space amenities to protect environmentally sensitive features, maintenance of historic sites, steep slope areas and stream corridors in permanent open space; modification of Policy 2.1.4.5 to include a mandatory open space requirement of at least 20 percent; and use of the Rural Residential Low Density designation for wildland fire hazard lands, grazing lands and other remote under accessible lands.

Impact 3.4.6: Policies in General Plan would increase the level of impacts to open space lands. It is determined that a number of policies contained in the Project Description could increase the level of impact to open space lands. These policies include: Policy 2.1.4.4 concerning negotiated rather than specific design features for new communities; description of Rural Residential land use designation which could lead to fragmentation of open space areas and increase density through the 10-acre minimum provision and Natural Resource designation which only applies to areas with economic extractive resources (minerals and timber) and Policy 2.2.3.18, the density bonus program which would potentially create impacts on environmentally-sensitive lands by increased density; and Policy

2.2.1.5 which establishes maximum impervious surfaces for all residential and non-residential land use categories.

No impacting policies (in terms of open space resources) were identified under the General Plan Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, the Rural Residential designation could potentially fragment open space areas by the subdivision of lands into 10-acre parcels.

Mitigation measures are stated that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level, as follows: changing the Rural Residential designation to 1 dwelling unit per 20-40 acres; inclusion of important watershed and river canyons, critical wildlife/plant habitat, wetlands, lakes and ponds in the Natural Resource designation; modification of the density bonus program to limit density bonuses to 25 percent, one unit for each 100 acres dedicated to open space and one additional dwelling unit for each land unit set aside in open space beyond the 30 percent requirement; and modification of the policy to adjust the maximum impervious surface coverage to 10 percent for Low Density Residential and 5 percent for Rural Residential, with exceptions considered for institutional uses through a special use permit.

#### **D. Public Services and Infrastructure**

Eleven impacts are analyzed under the nine separate impact types in this chapter. Below is a discussion of the impacts considered under this section.

Impact 4.2.1: Reduction in existing levels of fire protection. Based on a staffing level of 1.29 fire fighters per 1,000 population, it is determined that the following staffing levels would be required: 149 additional staff would be required at 2015; and at Buildout, 324 for the Project Description, 267 for the Alternative, and 387 for the No Project Alternative. Regional Analysis Area 1, due to its higher growth potential, would require the most new personnel. The ISO ratings for the districts described in this analysis indicate that the majority will require significant augmentation to maintain service concurrently with the projected growth in the region; there will also be an increased demand. This is considered a significant impact for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the primary difference is the lower potential for growth in the Rural Regions. Due to the existing ISO ratings of the rural fire districts, even a lower increment of additional growth will result in potentially significant impacts on the fire districts.

Under the No Project Alternative, the impacts are considered similar to the Project Description and therefore potentially significant.

Policies in the Project Description will partially reduce the impacts to levels of service for fire protection. An additional mitigation measure modifies the policy on service levels reflecting changes in levels of service over that which appear in the Project Description.

Impact 4.2.2: Additional residential development will occur in areas mapped as high or very high wildland fire hazard areas. Additional residential development will occur in areas mapped as high or very high wildland fire hazard areas. The DEIR identifies several areas of the County with potential additional medium and high density development within high and very high fire hazard zones. In addition to these areas, lands designated Rural Residential and Low Density Residential are located in high and very high fire hazard zones. Overall, it is determined that additional suburban and rural development accommodated by the Project Description will expose a larger population to existing wildland fire hazards. This impact is considered significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, densities in some areas are lessened, resulting in lower populations and the reduction of the impact in high and very high fire hazard areas. However, the impact is still considered significant for this Alternative.

Impacts under the No Project Alternative are considered significant as they are similar in nature to the Project Description. In areas which are designated with the Platted Lands overlay in the Project Description or General Plan Alternative the impact would be increased.

Impacts would be partially reduced by policies that appear in the Project Description. The impact would be reduced to a less than significant level by inclusion of the following additional mitigation measures: preparation of Wildfire Hazard Reduction Plans on all subdivision proposals within high and very high fire hazards areas; requirements for road and address signs on all new building permits pursuant to the Fire Safe Regulations; areas in Pilot Hill, Pollock Pines, Sly Park, and Sierra Springs identified in the impact discussion for the Project Description shall be designated Low Density Residential or a less dense designation; and application of Rural Residential and Rural Residential Low Density designations in areas of high and very high fire hazard, respectively.

Impact 4.2.3: Development under the Project Description and General Plan Alternative would require a substantial increase in the number of sworn officers assigned to patrol and investigative duties within the Sheriff's Department. At the current staffing of .89 sworn officers per 1000 daytime population, there would be a need for 124 additional sworn officers to serve the 2015 population at



existing service levels. Three hundred forty-nine sworn officers would be required to serve the Buildout population. This additional demand for law enforcement services is determined to be a significant impact.

Under the General Plan Alternative, Buildout population would require 308 sworn officers. This is considered a significant impact.

Data on employment were not available to perform this calculation for the No Project Alternative at Buildout. However, based on the fact that the population under this Alternative would be higher than both the Project Description and General Plan Alternative, this would be considered a significant impact.

Policy 5.1.2.2 in the Project Description, requiring concurrency of services partially mitigates this impact. No other mitigation measures are available at this time. This impact will remain potentially significant unless funding is available to increase staffing concurrent with growth demands. .

Impact 4.2.4: Additional population accommodated by the General Plan will increase the demand on school districts for school facilities. Overall demand for school facilities would be highest under the Project Description due to the higher level of development accommodated by this Plan. Policies on school services in the Project Description could allow additional discretionary development in school districts which have inadequate facilities. The impact is considered significant under the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, overall demand for school facilities would be less due to the lower densities in the Rural Regions. Policy 5.8.1.1 contained in the General Plan Alternative requires a more stringent level of concurrence than policies in the Project Description. This impact is considered less than significant under this Alternative due to the requirement for adequate school facilities concurrent with development.

The overall demand for school facilities would be the highest under the No Project Alternative. There is no consistent policy guidance in the Area Plans to ensure adequate school facilities concurrent with new development. The impact is considered significant under this Alternative.

Implementation of the following mitigation measures is determined to reduce the impact to a less than significant level: amending Table 5-1 of the Public Services and Utilities Element to provide that the level of service be “as determined appropriate by the school districts”; reliance on school districts to review development applications to determine the ability of the district to serve the new development, with the level of educational services not permitted to be reduced below acceptable levels as a consequence of new development; addition of language to Policy 5.8.2.1 requiring cooperation with school districts in

identifying potential new school sites, with all new schools being subject to findings of General Plan consistency and subject to a special use permit; requirement for Planned Communities to set aside land for schools.

Impact 4.2.5: *Population growth in El Dorado County will result in a substantial increase in the need for affordable, licensed child care facility space.* It is determined that the projected population at the year 2015 will result in a need for an additional 1,672 day care spaces, and the population at Buildout will result in a need for approximately 4,588 additional day care spaces. This is considered to be a significant impact for the Project Description.

The population at Buildout under the General Plan Alternative would result in a need for an additional 3,785 day care spaces. The population at Buildout under the No Project Alternative would result in the need for an additional 5,485 day care spaces. The increase in demand is considered a significant impact for both Alternatives.

The following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level: allowing by right and setting aside space for child care centers in large scale commercial/office projects, in large multifamily housing developments, in mixed use developments in specific plans, in Planned Communities, in major employment centers, and near transit facilities.

Impact 4.2.6: *Additional development accommodated by the Project Description will increase the demand on EID wastewater collection and treatment facilities.* It is revealed in three tables that the existing capacity of both the Deer Creek Plant (2.5 mgd ADWF) and the El Dorado Hills plant (1.6 mgd ADWF) is substantially less than the projected demand under the Project Description for both the 2015 and Buildout scenarios. EID's view is that if the growth projections for the General Plan that is finally adopted are used for facilities planning purposes, that the growth can be accommodated, provided that funding is available for construction of the facilities. It is beyond the scope of this DEIR to evaluate the environmental impacts of the establishment of new or expanded sewer treatment facilities. In order to expand or construct new facilities, a number of State agency discharge requirements must be met and alternative treatment and discharge methods must be addressed. Although there is a potential for impacting existing facilities, based on EID's plans for future expansion, the impact is considered less than significant.

The projections under the General Plan Alternative are close to those of the Project Description, which reflects the similarity in land uses in the Community Regions. Unknown impacts from development and new or expanded sewer systems under this Alternative would be similar to those of the Project Description. For the same reason as stated above, the impact is considered less than significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, the number of dwelling units in the Community Regions served by EID is approximately 54 percent of the number of dwelling units possible under the Project Description. This would result in a proportionally lower demand on EID's wastewater treatment facilities. It is assumed that buildout sewer flows under this Alternative would exceed the existing treatment capacities at EID's wastewater treatment facilities. The impact to EID facilities under this Alternative is considerably less than the Project Description, but expansion will be needed. The effects of expansion are unknown. The impact is considered less than significant for this Alternative.

Several policies in the Project Description are determined to reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

Impact 4.2.7: Development accommodated by the Project Description and General Plan Alternative will increase generation of solid waste. It is determined that by the year 2015, 79,523 tons per year of refuse will be generated on the West Slope. At the Project Description Buildout population, 125,800 tons per year of refuse will be generated. The impact on solid waste disposal would be potentially significant if the planned expansion of the Union Mine Landfill and recycling operations are not implemented. The Tahoe Basin population is served by the Lockwood landfill in Storey County, Nevada, and is estimated to have sufficient capacity for another 100 years which is well beyond the projected time horizon of this General Plan update.

Under the General Plan Alternative, projected Buildout population would result in the generation of 111,000 tons per year of refuse which could be accommodated by the Union Mine landfill with approved expansion and recycling operations. The impact on solid waste disposal would be potentially significant if the planned expansion and recycling operations are not implemented.

Under the No Project Alternative, the projected Buildout population would result in the generation of 103,430 tons per year of refuse, which could be accommodated by the Union Mine landfill with approved expansion and recycling operations. The impact on solid waste disposal would be potentially significant if the planned expansion and recycling operations are not implemented.

It is determined that policies in the Project Description will reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

Impact 4.2.8: Additional residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural development within the County will increase the use, storage, manufacture, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials. This impact is considered less than significant for the Project Description and both Alternatives due to the existing planning and regulatory programs currently in place.



Impact 4.2.9: Additional development could occur on lands contaminated by hazardous waste. The Environmental Management Department maintains lists of contaminated sites within the County, the majority of which are leaking underground storage tanks and old landfills. The impact is considered potentially significant for the Project Description and both Alternatives.

The impact is considered less than significant with implementation of the following mitigation measure: determination if a site is contaminated prior to any subdivision of land and if contamination is found to exist, remediation of the site prior to issuance of new land entitlement or building permit.

Impact 4.2.10: Additional development will create a need for expanded services from PG&E. It is stated that PG&E does not foresee any constraints to growth which would result from an inability to provide adequate services. In terms of bulk power, PG&E has ample resources to meet a wide range of projected growth estimates. Provided that substation development is not hampered, PG&E electrical services will be expanded concurrent with growth throughout the County. The impact is determined to be similar under both Alternatives. The impact is determined to be less than significant with policies provided for in the Project Description.

Impact 4.2.11: Additional population in the County will affect planning for response to extraordinary situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and National Security Emergencies. The Multi-Hazard Functional Plan is discussed as the County's document for use in hazard planning. The impact is determined to be less than significant for the Project Description and both Alternatives with the following mitigation measure: utilization of the Multi-Hazard Function Plan for purposes of hazard planning and updating the plan on a regular basis.

#### **E. Water: Resources, Quality, and Hazards**

Eight impacts are analyzed under this section of the DEIR. The specific impacts are as follows:

Impact 5.2.1: Increase in demand for public water service, and reduction in existing service levels. The Fourth Draft Water Supply vs. Demand table, (included in Appendix E of the DEIR) provides the estimated water demand for the years 1994, 2015, and Buildout for both the Project Description and the General Plan Alternative. The ability of the water purveyors to provide a reliable water supply for this projected future growth is a function of how much surplus water they currently have; how many unserved parcels and projects are already approved in their service areas; how much other demand exists (e.g., existing developed parcels dependent on wells that will need to convert to a public water supply due to groundwater quality or quantity problems); and how much

increased agricultural demand there will be. The last factor is determined to be the uncertainty of prospects for increasing supply or improving the efficiency of use.

It is noted in the DEIR that as of August 1994, EID had 2,550 acre-feet of water in surplus, enough for about 4,000 new residential connections. The best estimate is that EID has approximately 7,530 existing unserved vacant parcels of which 2,077 are parcels of five acres or larger. Although it is unlikely they would all develop, were they to do so, they would require approximately 12,770 acre-feet of water. (Note: There are 231 multifamily parcels included in this total, resulting in what appears to be a disproportionate water demand for the 7,530 parcels identified.) There are 5,923 parcels in the approved tentative map stage with a maximum estimated demand of 4,770 acre-feet. There is a balance of 4,441 potential parcels within the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan area with a maximum estimated demand of 3,080 acre-feet. There are an additional 8,796 parcels being processed with a maximum estimated demand of 6,120 acre-feet. These estimates include residential, commercial, and industrial demands (El Dorado County Water Agency 1994).

The Georgetown Divide Public Utility District is also approaching a water shortage whereby demand will exceed supply. They currently have a supply balance of 2,430 acre-feet; however, they have a demand based on existing vacant lots and approved projects of 2,970 acre-feet. They have 1,933 vacant lots within their district. GDPUD is waiting for authorization to utilize U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (CVP, "Fazio Water") contract water along with EID. A 50 percent share of this contract would provide an additional firm yield of 5,625 acre-feet. This water is expected in about five years.

The County Water Agency is working with the West Slope purveyors on a number of projects. These projects are discussed in the Water Supply section of the DEIR. In order to deliver these future water supplies, the water purveyors will have to plan, obtain regulatory approvals, secure financing, and actually construct facilities to divert, treat, and distribute the water.

Since both EID and GDPUD have the potential in the short-term to experience water shortages, the General Plan policies encouraging growth to occur within the Community Regions may be affected. Such limitations could result in a slow down of growth in those areas and greater pressures to construct projects in rural areas dependent on wells.

Once the General Plan is approved and the purveyors know where growth is likely to occur, they can prepare capital improvement plans for these expansions.

It is further stated that the Project Description directs that public water be utilized within Community Regions, and the Capital Improvement Program emphasizes capacity improvements in Community Regions and Rural Centers, and health and safety improvements in Rural Regions. This direction is given as a way of more efficiently providing service.

A number of policies direct growth to Community Regions and Rural Centers, require public water for Community Regions, and require concurrency of development and water availability.

If growth exceeds the available water for any of the water purveyors, the following impacts could occur:

- Existing customers (including agricultural accounts) may be requested or required to further conserve during times of water shortage; and
- Purveyors could stop accepting new customers with resulting impacts on property owners and the local economy.

It is stated that one aspect of the General Plan is the possibility that significantly more land could be designated for development than is actually likely to occur to the year 2015. (This is also discussed under Impact 1.3.1 of the Land Use, Population, and Growth-Inducing Impacts Section). This is premised on the idea that market forces should not be unnecessarily constrained. If any constraints (e.g., limited water supply availability) were reached, future growth could not be accommodated until supplies increased.

If public water supplies are not available to accommodate market demands, the concurrency/phasing (Policies 5.1.2.1, 5.1.2.3 and 5.2.1.2) provisions of the General Plan would restrict the approval of discretionary projects until provisions were increased. If public water supply becomes a constraint (short-term or long-term), a closer accounting of the remaining supply with the County General Plan and Capital Improvement Plan will result. This will need to occur so that the growth increment to be accommodated will strategically implement the General Plan. The policies of the Project Description identified earlier in this section should result in this type of approach.

The three Planned Communities are discussed. It is determined that these lands are examples of new growth areas that will create a substantial demand on the availability of the current water supplies. Special phasing provisions should be employed regarding these areas to assure that an adequate water supply is available. Supply and demand are analyzed for the two main water purveyors in the County. It is determined that the amount of growth projected for the Project Description, General Plan Alternative, and No Project Alternative significantly



exceeds the currently available water supplies. Therefore, it is determined that this impact is significant for the Project Description and Alternatives.

Under the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative, it is determined that the amount of growth requiring public water significantly exceeds the currently available supply for all areas of the West Slope. The effect for the 2015 projections would be equal for all Alternatives. Due to the higher potential population for the Project Description and No Project Alternative, the Buildout impacts for these two Alternatives would obviously be greater.

A number of policies in the Project Description are determined to partially mitigate the impacts on public water supplies and infrastructure. The following additional mitigation measure is determined to reduce the impact to a less than significant level: addition of a policy that would provide guidelines as to project approvals and water availability, including development of the Planned Communities only after the Fazio water allocation (USBR-CVP) is available; annexations in Rural Regions only if groundwater is not available to serve a development or infrastructure already is present to the property; priority for developments with existing infrastructure, priority given to approve affordable housing and non-residential projects in times of declared water shortages.

Impact 5.2.2: Additional growth will occur in areas which are dependent on private wells for water, potentially affecting the quality and quantity of groundwater. Existing data on groundwater supply and quality is lacking for the County. Some areas of sparse water supply have been identified by staff of the Environmental Management Department. Even though new dry wells are occasionally experienced, it is rare, however, that a proposed rural residential project has not been able to develop wells with acceptable water production. The Project Description, with a potential increase of 172 percent over the existing 1990 rural population, appears to have the potential for creating a heavy demand on groundwater for domestic use. Groundwater is considered unreliable due to the lack of information quantifying it. Therefore, it is determined that the impact would be considered significant.

The General Plan Alternative has the lowest growth potential with an 84 percent increase over that which existed in 1990. Although growth in the Rural Regions would be less under the General Plan Alternative, the impact is still considered significant.

Under the No Project Alternative, the potential impact in Rural Regions would be even greater (an increase of 253 percent) and it is determined that there would very likely be a significant impact with the possibility of severely reducing groundwater supply in many areas of the County to unacceptable levels.

Policies in the Project Description are determined to partially mitigate the impacts to groundwater. The following additional mitigation measures would aid in reducing this impact: requirement for discretionary projects to demonstrate that groundwater is adequate as part of the review and approval process; restricting density on groundwater dependent developments to no greater than 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres except in areas of known supply limitations where the minimum parcel size will be 10 acres or larger; during the five years after adoption of the General Plan, assess and analyze the collected well data, determine if densities are consistent with supply limitations; and modification of Policy 5.2.3.2 to require that all new wells demonstrate that water quality meets both primary and secondary drinking water standards.

It is determined that in the long-term, until additional analysis is completed, the Buildout impact is still considered to be significant and there are no assurances the impacts can or will be mitigated. Therefore, it is determined that this impact cannot be completely avoided at this time.

**Impact 5.2.3: Increase in surface water pollutants.** Surface water quality in the County is generally good except for erosion and urban runoff. Agricultural (confined animals), mining, industrial, and governmental facilities (corporation yards) are point sources which would generally be handled through the discretionary special use permit process. Mitigation measures, if necessary, could be made conditions of approval on the discretionary application, reducing potential impacts on surface water quality to less than significant. These sources are generally minor in nature and are not expected to increase substantially through the Buildout of the Plan.

It is determined that urban runoff from paved roads and parking lots represent a potentially significant source for pollution of surface water with oils and salts.

While erosion cannot be completely eliminated, erosion control practices recommended by the Resource Conservation District, if adequately applied, can greatly reduce the potential impacts caused by the anticipated construction. Additionally, during the course of project reviews, application of design practices which require less initial grading will result in less erosion; and the separation from riparian and drainage courses should mitigate this impact to less than significant on a project-by-project basis. Lacking any firm evidence to the contrary, cumulatively with both 2015 and Buildout projections, impacts to the surface water caused by erosion/siltation could be significant.

Water quality sampling studies are discussed at length. Water quality testing on the County's waterways occur mainly to determine if the water is unhealthy for body contact typically related to recreational use of the water. Testing is also warranted to identify possible point sources of contamination. No stream water is safe for drinking due to the contamination that occurs resulting from domestic

animal and wildlife activities. One of the factors affecting surface water quality is the volume of water flowing in the stream or river. The South Fork of the American River has the lowest bacterial counts of all County waterways tested. Streams with lower volumes typically are worse. Additionally, bacterial counts within the water body also fluctuate due to water temperature, time of year, amount of usage, dam releases, and effects of wildlife, agriculture, and drainage (Environmental Management Department memo, November 1, 1994).

It is stated that periodic testing of the American River during the last five years has yielded consistent bacterial levels during sampling periods. These levels have ranged from 130-300 MPN/100 ML. During this testing period there has never been a two-week period with excessive bacterial level warranting beach closure (Environmental Management Department memo, November 1, 1994).

Given the recreational and economic importance of the American River, it is determined that it would be desirable to better understand the causes of poor quality within the River Basin and, where possible, reduce those sources which impact the river. To accomplish this, detailed analytical studies should be undertaken on a consistent basis to improve the level of data available on the American River's water quality. In addition to consistent, regularly-scheduled sampling, dye tests may also be necessary in areas where septic system failure is suspected.

Under the General Plan Alternative, impacts would be similar to the Project Description, although at a lesser scale. The impact, therefore, would be considered significant under this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, the impacts are considered to be greater since more rural development would occur. Therefore, the impact is considered significant for this Alternative.

A number of policies in the Project Description would partially mitigate surface water pollutant impacts. The following mitigation measures would aid in mitigating the impact: addition of no disturbance setbacks along perennial streams, rivers, lakes, intermittent streams and wetlands; inclusion of parking lot storm drainage facilities, where practical and warranted, to include separation of oils and salts from storm water; evaluation of feasible alternatives to the use of salt for ice control on County roads; and as a means to improve the water quality affecting the County's recreational waters, implementation of enhanced and increased detailed analytical water quality studies to identify and reduce point sources.

It is determined that this impact would remain cumulatively significant.



Impact 5.2.4: Increase in groundwater pollutants. It is noted that the belief that on-site septic systems pollute the groundwater may not necessarily be true. The potential for contamination increases as parcel size decreases below two acres. Although neither the Project Description nor the General Plan Alternative propose any high density development to be served by on-site systems, several established high density areas exist which may be subject to in-fill. Even though most soils in the County are rated as “severe” in terms of septic capability, the Division of Environmental Health reports that these constraints can be overcome by a variety of engineered septic systems. When failures do occur (said to average about one per year), they are generally caused by a defect in the well lining or seals which permit some infiltration of pollutants near the surface. However, lacking well test data to support this conclusion, it is presumed a significant cumulative impact may occur at Buildout.

Under the General Plan Alternative, given the reduction in number of potential lots permitted by the General Plan Alternative and the increase in general rural lot size, the impact, if any, should be less than the Project Description and therefore is considered less than significant. However, lacking well test data to support this conclusion, it is presumed a cumulative impact may occur which could be significant.

While the No Project Alternative will permit a greater intensity and density of development in the rural area given the existing standards and variety of systems available, the impact is considered to be less than significant. However, lacking well test data to support this conclusion, it is presumed a cumulative impact may occur which could be significant.

Policies in the Project Description would partially mitigate the identified impacts. The following additional mitigation measures would aid in mitigating the impacts: modification of Policy 5.3.1.2 to restrict creation of lots less than five acres in Medium Density Residential relying on on-site septic systems unless public water is available; and upgrading of standards for on-site septic systems for second dwellings and requirement for temporary mobilehomes occupied for more than six months to be connected to an on-site system. With these mitigation measures and current regulations, the impacts should be less than significant. However, lacking well test data to support this conclusion, it is presumed a cumulative impact may occur which could be significant.

Impact 5.2.5: Additional development within 100-year floodplain. It is noted that land use designations along flood-prone waterways are predominantly Rural Residential and Low Density Residential. An exception is in Cameron Park along Deer Creek. The County’s *Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance* regulates development within the 100-year floodplain but does not prohibit creation of new parcels within the floodplain. This impact is considered significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the impacts would be considered less due to the lower density ranges in the Rural Residential and Low Density Residential land use designations along with the Natural Resource Designation along the river canyons.

Under the No Project Alternative, the impact is determined to be similar to the Project Description and therefore considered significant.

Policies under the Project Description are determined to partially mitigate the above impacts. The following mitigation measures would reduce the impact to a less than significant level: prohibiting the creation of new parcels entirely within the 100-year floodplain; and requiring new parcels partially within the 100-year floodplain to have sufficient land outside the floodplain to construct dwelling units, accessory structures, and septic systems.

Impact 5.2.6: Surface drainage from new development could increase the flood risk in developed areas. Drainage impacts are determined to be the greatest in urbanized areas which have a higher percentage of land developed with impervious surfaces. This is determined to be a potentially significant impact for the Project Description.

Impacts under the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative are determined to be similar to those in the Project Description and therefore are considered potentially significant.

Two policies in the Project Description are determined to partially mitigate this impact. The following additional policies would reduce this impact to a less than significant level: requirement that storm drainage systems for new development meet the NPDES requirements and be sized appropriately for new development; require evaluation of funding requirements for maintenance, operation, and infrastructure replacement program for regionally effective storm water drainage management; and coordination with neighboring jurisdictions to mitigate the impacts of new development that could create runoff onto downstream parcels.

Impact 5.2.7: Critical or high occupancy structures could be located in areas subject to dam inundation. Most properties within dam inundation areas are designated Rural Residential and Low Density Residential on the land use maps. Potentially affected public facilities include the Lotus school (within the inundation area of Chili Bar) and the Silver Fork School in Kyburz which could be affected by dam failures in the upper American River watershed. It is determined that two policies in the Project Description would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

## F. Parks and Recreation

Two impacts are analyzed under the Parks and Recreation section of the DEIR. The specific impacts are as follows:

Impact 6.2.1: Insufficient parkland is available to achieve the standard of 5 acres/1,000 population of active parkland for the Cameron Park/El Dorado Hills areas and 3 acres/1,000 population for the remainder of the County. It is determined in this analysis that Policy 9.1.1.1 (setting a standard of 5 acres/1,000 active parkland and 3.5 acres/1,000 natural/buffer area) in the Project Description is inconsistent with State law in that the amount of parkland dedication is limited to 3 acres/1,000 population unless a higher ratio exists, up to a maximum of 5 acres/1,000 population. The analysis, therefore, is based on the existing standard, as stated above. Tables V-6-5 and V-6-6 in the DEIR text depict the projected parkland requirements for the Project Description at 2015 and Buildout for the Project Description, General Plan Alternative, and No Project Alternative.

As is shown in the Tables, on a County-wide basis a total of 470 acres of parkland would be required for 2015, and for Buildout: 1,390 for the Project Description, 1,231 for the General Plan Alternative, and 1,571 for the No Project Alternative. In the Market Area analysis, it is determined that the majority of the parkland will be required in the El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park/Shingle Springs and Diamond Springs/El Dorado Market Areas, the areas proposed for the highest growth. A determination is made that it is difficult to predict if the required standard will be met, and therefore the failure to achieve the standard would be considered a potentially significant impact for the Project Description and the two Alternatives.

Policies in the Project Description would partially mitigate the stated impact. Additional mitigation includes the following: parks shall be developed at a standard of 5 acres/1,000 population within a planned development; establishing a standard of 5 acres/1,000 population for the El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park areas and the three Planned Communities with parkland dedication/in-lieu fees being directed towards the purchase and funding of neighborhood and community parks; incorporation of trails and linear parks within river and stream buffers; recognition of previously adopted parks and recreation master plans (for Cameron Park and El Dorado Hills Community Services Districts and Georgetown Divide Recreation District); and updating of *The El Dorado County Interim Master Plan for Parks, Recreation Facilities and Trails* and presentation to the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

The impact is determined to be a significant unavoidable impact as it would be speculative at best to state that the required parkland standard would be met at 2015 or Buildout conditions.



Impact 6.2.2: Policies contained within the adopted Bikeway Master Plan, Management Plan, South Fork of the American River, and Hiking and Equestrian Trails Master Plan conflict with policies in the General Plan. A review was made of the above plans and Project Description policies and it was determined that policies contained within the Project Description would implement the adopted recreation plans. Several mitigation measures are stated that would more fully implement the adopted Plans, including: providing a five percent bonus for constructing and providing access to public resources; requiring the update of the *Bikeway Master Plan* and *Trails Master Plan* within one year of the adoption of the General Plan, undertaking major revision studies of these plans every five years, and making the bicycle routes established in the *Bikeway Master Plan* a part of the Circulation and Parks and Recreation Elements; conditioning of all discretionary applications to provide an irrevocable offer of trail easement dedication as designated on the *Trails Master Plan*; and provision for review of the *Management Plan, South Fork of the American River*, and updating if necessary with all aspects of land use to be considered. This impact is considered less than significant based on the Project Description policies and additional mitigation measures stated above.

## **G. Soils, Geology, and Mineral Resources**

Seven potential impacts are analyzed under this Section. These impacts are discussed individually below.

Impact 7.2.1: Increased development in areas potentially subject to seismic hazards. Named faults and “inferred” faults are identified within all of the Regional Analysis areas. The main faults identified within the County are the Bear Mountains Fault, Melones Fault, and Western Tahoe Fault. It is determined that this impact would be potentially significant as it is impossible to predict whether a seismic event could occur. The impact is considered similar for the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative and therefore also potentially significant for these Alternatives.

No additional mitigation measures are recommended over and above those already existing development regulations.

Impact 7.2.2: Additional development will result in substantial grading and construction activities in areas of known soil instability and steep slopes, resulting in accelerated erosion and sedimentation. An overview discussion states that policies/ordinances currently in effect deal with this issue. The Soil Conservation Service identifies potential erosion impacts on slopes exceeding 15 percent. A method of calculating erosion potential (Universal Soil Loss Equation) is briefly discussed; a more detailed discussion appears in Appendix C of the DEIR document. The issue of slopes/erosion potential in river canyons is discussed. Due to the highly erosive nature of most soils in the river canyons and their high

fire hazard, it is determined that these areas (with identified highly erosive soils and in a high fire hazard area) should be designated Natural Resource as described in the General Plan Alternative. A discussion by Regional Analysis Area determines that the greatest potential for erosion activity would occur within Regional Analysis Area 1, the area proposed for the majority of the County's growth in the future. Areas with slopes in excess of 40 percent are located in most of the Regional Analysis Areas and for the most part designated Low Density Residential, Rural Residential, and Natural Resource; slopes in excess of 15 percent are located throughout the County, with a variety of land use designations. Due to the potential for erosion impacts and widespread occurrence of slopes over 15 percent, this impact is considered potentially significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the impacts are determined to be similar, with the following exceptions: steep slopes in the river canyons are designated Natural Resources and densities are lower in the Rural Residential and Rural Residential-Low Density designations. Although the densities are lower in this Alternative, the impact remains potentially significant.

Under the No Project Alternative, the impact is determined to be similar to the Project Description due to the comparable range of land use designations. Therefore, the impact is considered potentially significant for this Alternative.

Policies in the Project Description partially mitigate the above-stated impacts. The following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant impact: prohibiting discretionary development on slopes exceeding 40 percent unless needed to complete circulation/access and for emergency access, and septic systems on slopes over 30 percent; utilization of Natural Resource designation as described in the General Plan Alternative for all river canyons; and encouraging the Soil Conservation Service to update the 1974 *Soil Survey* and to digitize all soil mapping units on a Geographic Information System.

Impact 7.2.3: *Additional development could occur in areas with expansive soils.* Expansive soils could potentially impact development in areas with moderate to high shrink-swell potential. The majority of soils in the County range from low to moderate shrink-swell potential. Areas with high shrink-swell potential occur in the Mosquito and Somerset/Fairplay Market Areas; the remainder of the County contains soils with low to moderate shrink-swell potential. This potential impact is considered less than significant for the Project Description and both Alternatives due to the existing requirement for soils analysis for development applications.

No additional mitigation measures are required.

Impact 7.2.4: Additional development could occur in areas subject to landslides. Areas along the Foothills Fault zone (discussed under Impact 7.2.1 above) are identified as being potentially susceptible to landslides. Other likely places for landslide occurrences are identified as follows: in areas where landsliding has already occurred (e.g., along U.S. Highway 50 near Ice House Road), slopes covered with deep soils and hillsides heavily saturated with groundwater. In addition, landslides falling into lakes could potentially cause waves which could imperil lakeside development (e.g., Fallen Leaf Lake). This impact is considered potentially significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative, the impacts are considered similar and therefore would create a potentially significant impact.

One policy in the Project Description addresses this impact and reduces the impact to a less than significant level.

Impact 7.2.5: Additional development could occur in areas subject to avalanche hazards. It is determined that this impact is primarily limited to the Tahoe Basin Market Area, in particular in the areas around Fallen Leaf Lake and Echo Lake. At particular risk in these areas are ski resorts. However, the Project Description land use map designates the area around Fallen Leaf Lake as High Density Residential. The lands surrounding Echo Lake are non-jurisdictional. Ski resorts have ongoing avalanche control programs which would lessen the impact in these areas. However, the impact is considered potentially significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the area surrounding Fallen Leaf Lake is designed High Density Residential-Platted Lands, which would reduce the level of impact. The impact is considered less for this Alternative, but still considered significant for those lands exposed to avalanches.

Under the No Project Alternative, impacts would be the same as for the Project Description and therefore considered potentially significant.

Mitigation measures for this impact include: precluding future subdivision of the lands around Fallen Leaf Lake; and requirement for all new structures located within avalanche susceptible areas to be designed to withstand the forces of an avalanche event.

Impact 7.2.6: Additional development could result in reduction of the amount of land available for mineral resource extraction. The western portion of the County is divided and mapped into four quadrangles by the Division of Mines and Geology: Folsom, Placerville, Georgetown, and Auburn. These areas are analyzed separately. Seven areas within the County portion of Placerville quadrangle are identified as containing significant measured or indicated mineral



reserves. The Mother Lode Gold Belt lies in this area. A range of land use designations exist in this quadrangle including High, Medium, and Low Density Residential, Rural Residential, Commercial, and Industrial. Significant sources of limestone and chromite resources lie within the Auburn quadrangle (Cool Limestone Quarry, Flagstaff Hill Chromite District). These areas are designated Rural Residential, which is considered compatible with mining resources. The Georgetown Quadrangle contains portions of the Mother Lode Gold Belt, which are designated Low Density Residential and Rural Residential. The Low Density Residential designation is considered incompatible with surface mining operations. The Folsom Quadrangle contains the Marble Valley limestone resource, which may not be economically feasible to extract at the present time. The area is designated Low Density Residential in the Project Description. Due to the incompatible land use designations of some identified mineral resources, this impact is considered significant for the Project Description.

The difficulty of surface mining is attributed to both the established land use pattern and the effects of Measure A (with particular regard to construction material quarries). Establishment of the largest parcel size buffers possible around these areas is recommended.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the land use designations within the Placerville and Diamond Springs/El Dorado Community Regions are similar to those in the Project Description. Lower overall densities contained in this Alternative would create more consistency between the land use map and the mitigating policies for this impact. The impact, however, remains significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, impacts are considered similar to those of the Project Description and therefore considered significant.

Policies in the Project Description provide partial mitigation for the impact stated above. The following additional mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less than significant level: requiring a minimum parcel size of 20 acres for a lands (outside Community Regions and Rural Centers) within or adjacent to lands identified as MRZ-2; consideration of Rural Residential Low Density as being compatible with surface mining; and requesting the CDMG to identify and map future important non-metallic construction material sites and after completion, recognizing in General Plan and zoning for mineral resource management.

Impact 7.2.7: Existing and future mining operations could result in land use compatibility impacts with adjacent lands uses, as well as environmental impacts on a range of resources. This impact is determined to be less than significant under the Project Description and both Alternatives due to the policies contained under Goal 7.2.

## H. Biological Resources

Three impacts are analyzed under this section of the DEIR. The impacts are analyzed individually below.

Impact 8.2.1: Elimination, disturbance, or interruption of special status species as a direct or indirect result of development. It is determined that this impact is significant for the Project Description. These impacts are analyzed both at the Planning Concept (i.e., Community Regions, Rural Centers, Rural Regions, Agricultural Districts) and Regional Analysis Area levels. It is noted that special status species occur in all Regional Analysis Areas. Impacts to the five special status Pine Hill Endemic species are also analyzed under this impact section. Without the inclusion of the fifth identified plant preserve, it is concluded that the impact will be significant. Other special status animal and plant species are located throughout the County. Protection of these species is recognized to occur on State and Federal lands and on Natural Resource lands. Timber harvest plans require environmental review by State and Federal agencies; therefore program level protection of such species is already in place. The impact under the Project Description is considered significant.

Under the General Plan Alternative, it is determined that there are some major differences from the Project Description, such as the inclusion of a southern plant preserve and inclusion of major river canyons in the Natural Resource designation. Although it is determined that the impacts under this Alternative would be less than the Project Description, the impacts remain significant.

Under the No Project Alternative, it is determined that the potential for direct loss of special status species would be greater than for the Project Description due to the absence of Ecological Preserves and the 10-acre minimum densities allowed in all Rural Regions. The impact is determined to be significant for this Alternative.

A number of policies in the Project Description are determined to partially mitigate this impact. Additional mitigation measures include: modification of the Natural Resource designation to include important watershed and river canyons, critical wildlife habitat including deer migration corridors, rare, unique and endangered species and habitat, and unique and high quality natural communities as important natural resources; requirement for preparation of protection strategies for species, habitat and natural community preservation when development is proposed; requirement for habitat restoration if substantial habitat modification occurs through grading or other disturbances prior to approval of a discretionary development application; and establishment of the DFG recommended southern ecological preserve for the Pine Hill Endemic plant species in collaboration with the Department of Fish and Game and other Federal and local agencies.

It is determined that although the proposed mitigation will reduce the level of significance, significant indirect impacts resulting in loss of special status species will probably occur.

Impact 8.2.2: Direct or indirect loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat and/or degradation of habitat values. Five dominant wildlife habitats (tree dominated, shrub dominated, herbaceous dominated, aquatic and developed) are analyzed in terms of the Planning Concept and Regional Analysis Areas. The dominant wildlife habitats are affected by existing and projected land uses and population associated with the major concepts of the Project Description and Alternatives. Each land use concept may lead to alterations, removal, and/or degradation of the biological values of existing wildlife habitat resulting in potentially significant impacts. It is determined that this impact is significant for the Project Description. Biological integrity is impacted by air quality, water quality, forestry practices, water resource development, urban and rural development, road building, grazing, crop production/agricultural practices, introduction of exotic (non-native) species, flood control, stream bank protection, stream bed alteration, and recreational use and facilities. Habitat values vary from pristine to urban, with varying degrees of modification distinguishing levels of value in between

Under the General Plan Alternative, it is determined that the impact would be the same for the Community Regions and Rural Centers. The impact may be reduced due to the lower density definitions for rural land uses. In addition, this Alternative recognizes a fifth Ecological Preserve. However, the impact is determined to remain significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, this impact is determined to be greater than for the Project Description due to the overall higher population growth and allocations of more Buildout potential to the rural areas.



Numerous policies in the Project Description are determined to partially mitigate impacts to wildlife habitat. Additional mitigation measures include: modifying Policy 2.1.4.4 to add language concerning maintaining stream corridors in continuous and permanently dedicated open space; modifying Policy 2.1.4.5 to include 30+ percent parks/open space; modification of the Ecological Preserve overlay designation introductory paragraph; application of standards designed to maintain tree cover canopy in oak woodland habitats to discretionary permits; providing a mitigation option allowing restoration of oak woodland in a degraded condition; and prohibition of destruction or modification of any habitat without a permit to modify from the County.

Although the above mitigation measures would reduce the impacts, they would not reduce them to a less than significant level.

Impact 8.2.3: Disruption of deer migration patterns and critical deer habitat. Impacts to the ranges and migration corridors of the three deer herds present in the County are analyzed by Regional Analysis Area. Although the major deer activity occurs within Regional Analysis Area 5 (American River Canyon/Forest and Mosquito Market Areas), it is determined that impacts to the resident herds are potentially significant for the Project Description.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the land use designations are generally the same as for the Project Description. Therefore, the impact is potentially significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, it is noted that a Natural Resource designation does not exist for this Alternative, and some areas of critical habitat could be potentially subdivided into 10 acre parcels. The impacts are determined to be greater than for the Project Description and therefore significant.

A number of policies in the Project Description are cited as reducing the level of impact to deer herds. The following additional mitigation measures are proposed: requirement that future rezoning requests be analyzed for impact on critical wildlife habitat; modification of the Natural Resource designation to include deer migration corridors and critical summer and winter range as resources that should be protected; and that lands currently designated for parcel sizes less than 40 acres in critical ranges and migration corridors be zoned with a 40-acre minimum lot size and where possible placed into a General Plan designation that establishes a 40-acre minimum lot size.

It is determined that even with the inclusion of the above mitigation measures, the impact will remain potentially significant.

## I. Transportation

Four specific transportation/circulation related impacts are analyzed under the Transportation section. The impacts are discussed separately below.

**Impact 9.2.1: *Increase in Roadway LOS Deficiencies.*** Impacts identified for 2015 for the Project Description and General Plan Alternative are presented in tabular form (Table V-9-9 in the DEIR text). Buildout data were obtained by loading the holding capacity of the Project Description and General Plan Alternative onto the projected 2015 road network. Table V-9-10 in the text lists the acceptable LOS for the road segment, the 2015 Project Description LOS, and 2015 General Plan Alternative LOS after the proposed improvements have been made and the Buildout Project Description and General Plan Alternative LOS before further improvements are made. Improvements to the existing system are phased to address the needed capacity to accommodate the proposed land uses in the Buildout scenario. Incremental improvements for capacity widen significantly with the wider cross sections. It is determined that these factors can account for an improved LOS for Buildout versus the 2015 LOS.

It is determined that there will be a significant impact associated with the construction improvements necessary to achieve the acceptable level of service. If improvements are not made to the road system, the LOS will deteriorate below acceptable levels.

**Impact 9.2.2: *Increase in Vehicle Miles Travelled and Average Trip Lengths.*** Table V-9-11 below represents the results of estimates of Vehicle Miles Travelled and Average Trip Lengths derived from the Traffic Model.

TABLE V-9-11 VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED/AVERAGE TRIP LENGTHS			
	1990 Existing	Project Description	General Plan Alternative
<i>Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT)</i>	2,847,000	6,549,000	6,025,000
<i>Average Trip Lengths (minutes)</i>			
Home-Based Work	15.0	18.5	18.3
Home-Based Other	21.7	23.8	23.3
Non-Home-Based	20.6	23.0	23.0

It is determined that vehicle miles travelled and average trip lengths will increase for the Project Description and General Plan Alternative, resulting in the need for additional roadway capacity and the possibility of higher vehicle emissions. Average trip lengths would be expected to decrease within a TAZ that provides for a jobs/housing balance and if intrazonal trips are included in the total trips.

It is determined that both the Project Description and General Plan Alternative would continue to expand the reliance on the single occupancy vehicle and vehicle miles travelled will increase. Therefore, this impact is considered significant.

Impact 9.2.3: Increase in Average Daily Traffic Volumes (ADT). This impact is determined by loading the traffic model with projected 2015 land use numbers onto the base year road network. Traffic volumes for Buildout are determined by establishing the 2015 network (modified base year network based on 2015 land use impacts) and adding additional roads, lanes and in some cases shoulders and increased designed speed to help mitigate capacity impacts. If the new roads are not constructed, it is determined that there will generally be a greater impact to the roads in the vicinity of the new road location. It is noted that in some instances the Buildout volume is less than the 2015 volume (generally in the vicinity of the new roads).

It is determined that both the Project Description and General Plan Alternative provide a significant increase in daily traffic volumes over the existing levels.

Impact 9.2.4: Increase in Required Road Sizes. Required road sizes are determined from the peak hour traffic in relation to the level of service determined for each road segment. Tables V-9-12 through V-9-16 in the DEIR text illustrate the 2015 road improvements by Regional Analysis Area that are required to accommodate the Project Description and General Plan Alternative. The vast majority of required improvements are noted in Regional Analysis Area 1.

It is determined that the road lane numbers will increase on a large number of County roads and State highways. The physical impacts of expanding the roads to meet LOS standards is significant for both the Project Description and General Plan Alternative.

In this section, besides the analysis of the individual identified impacts, a separate environmental impact and policy analysis is presented. It is stated that the linkage between land use and transportation is strong, providing the most clear evidence of the differences between impacts in the Project Description and General Plan Alternative. A comparison of the concepts, strategies, objectives, and policies, in terms of transportation issues, is also presented. A discussion focusing on impacts to Community Regions, Rural Centers, and Rural Regions is presented



along with an analysis of the approach to transportation/land use utilized in both Plans.

In the Community Region analysis, the City of Placerville, Missouri Flat Road Corridor, South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado Hills, and Cameron Park areas are discussed. Special circulation issues are also addressed with discussions of Apple Hill, snow skiing traffic, recreation traffic, and rafting traffic. A discussion is also presented on routes that have been proposed over the years and rejected for a variety of reasons. Impacts to Rural Centers and Rural Regions is also discussed. Tables V-9-25 through V-9-29 in the DEIR text present data on impacted roads in Rural Regions. It is noted in the discussion of roads in Rural Regions that some of the roads will need to be expanded up to eight lanes, resulting in an alteration of the rural character of the area

A number of policy options are presented as follows:

1. Increasing system capacity through capital projects and operation efficiencies.

Numerous policies in the Project Description are cited that would partially mitigate impacts to the transportation and circulation system. The following policy modifications or additions would aid in mitigating the impacts: recognition that a portion of the impacts to the State highway system have external causes and presentation of a number of policies concerning this issue; modification of Objective 3.5.1 to apply LOS criteria only to certain roads of regional significance; addition of a new policy under Objective 3.5.1 that allows six roads within Rural Regions to function at LOS D once needed safety improvements and shoulders are installed; amendment of Policy 3.5.1.2 to specify that the CIP emphasize capacity improvements to achieve desired LOS in Community Regions and Rural Centers; and safety improvements in Rural Regions.

2. Reducing system demand by lowering vehicle miles travelled, average trip length or trip rates.

Numerous mitigation measures contained as policies in the Project Description are cited as mitigation measures in this respect. Additional mitigation measures include: modification of Policy 3.1.1.4 to add school and bus stops; and modification of Policy 3.11.1.6 requiring the County to establish a ridesharing program for County employees.

3. Modifying travel behavior through strategic land planning, public education, and incentives for desired travel decisions.

Numerous mitigation measures contained as policies in the Project Description are cited as mitigation measures in this respect. Additional mitigation measures that would aid in mitigating this impact include: addition of a new policy under Objective 3.1.2 directing residential development to areas where the existing LOS is acceptable or where in-fill takes advantage of the existing circulation system; adding language to Policy 3.2.1.1 that would allow base employment and regional commercial uses to be approved when LOS standards are exceeded if Vehicle Miles Traveled are demonstrated to be lowered on the regional circulation system; providing mixed use opportunities in all Community Regions and Rural Centers to aid in reducing trip rates and trip lengths; establishing programs in public schools to educate students on the “real” costs of traveling in single occupancy vehicles; working with SACOG to produce public information media items describing the benefits of using alternative transportation; and coordinating CIP for County road system with infrastructure plans of water and sewer entities.

4. Restricting residential densities.

Mitigation measures are proposed as follows: adoption of the Rural Region land use designations contained in the General Plan Alternative; and zoning all residential lands outside of Community Regions and Rural Centers at the largest minimum lot size range unless road LOS standards are brought up to acceptable levels.

Impacts 9.2.2., 9.2.3 and 9.2.4 are determined to be significant unavoidable impacts.

**J. Air Quality**

Five impacts are analyzed in this section Each impact is discussed below.

Impact 10.2.1: *Increase in Short-Term Emissions.* Short-term emissions are typically associated with site construction and the use of heavy equipment and haul and worker trips, dust generation due to grading activities, the application of asphalt and volatile organic compounds released from the use of coatings and dispensing of fuels. Adoption of the General Plan will lead to greater construction activity that will contribute to additional short-term emissions. These components are analyzed individually in the document. For the Project Description it is concluded that the emissions produced by construction will vary from project to project. Overall, enough construction activity will take place at any one time in the County to cause an exceedence of the daily impact criteria and therefore would be considered potentially significant

Under the General Plan Alternative and the No Project Alternative, it is determined that a similar level of emissions would be produced. Therefore, a potentially significant impact is projected.

A combination of policies in the Project Description and additional mitigation measures are determined to reduce impacts as follows: CO, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>x</sub>, and PM-10 emissions would typically be reduced by over 40 percent and ROG by 15 percent for heavy equipment exhaust emissions; the referenced dust control measures typically have an efficiency in excess of 50 percent; VOC emission reductions will depend on the level to which the mitigation measures are instituted and where quantifiable results are presented with the mitigation. The significance of the residual emissions is determined to be ultimately based on the level of construction occurring at any one time, but on a County-wide basis is expected to remain significant.

Impact 10.2.2: *Increase in Long-Term Emissions*. It is determined that the main source of long-term emissions is from vehicles travelling in and passing through the County. Other sources evaluated include stationary point sources (e.g., mining and industrial boiler operations) and stationary area sources (e.g., gas combustion emissions, evaporative emissions due to fueling operations, architectural coatings and combustion emissions from landscape utility equipment). Table V-10-2 in the DEIR text presents the combined projected mobile and stationary source emissions produced at 2015. The values indicate an exceedence of threshold significance criteria and therefore a potentially significant impact is predicted.

Table V-10-13 in the DEIR text illustrates emissions for the General Plan Alternative. Although the emissions are less than those projected for the Project Description, it is determined that the stated values would exceed the significance threshold criteria and a significant impact is projected.

Under the No Project Alternative, the emissions values exceed those projected for the Project Description, as well as exceeding the threshold criteria levels for significance. The impact, therefore, is considered significant.

Numerous policies in the Project Description are stated as partially reducing the magnitude of impacts of the air emissions burden. A variety of mitigation measures are proposed to aid in reducing long-term emissions, as follows: provision of pedestrian improvements, provision of incentives for ridesharing; adoption of air quality regulations concerning agricultural/fuel burning, use of chemical or water stabilizers on abandoned or fallow agricultural land, requiring all new construction applicants to implement measures to reduce air pollutant emissions on both residential and commercial/industrial developments; dust control measures; implementation of Title 24 regulations for energy-efficient design, passive solar design, use of central water heating systems; minimizing



electricity distribution losses, use of low-sodium lighting and replacement of wood burning stoves.

Although these mitigation measures are determined to reduce impacts to the extent reasonably feasible, overall for the County, the impact would remain significant.

**Impact 10.2.3: Increase in Toxic Air Emissions.** Under the Project Description discussion, a regulatory review is done concerning emissions standards for hazardous air pollutants. In addition, the various forms of construction emissions are described. A potentially significant impact is identified with the operation of any land use that produces or uses toxic materials identified by the CARB that could be released into the atmosphere.

Under the General Plan Alternative, it is determined that emissions of toxic air pollutants would be similar during both the construction and operational phases of this Alternative and would therefore remain significant.

Under the No Project Alternative, as more growth is projected, more construction and land disturbance would occur, creating the potential for release of both asbestos and silicates.

The following proposed mitigation measures are determined to reduce the impact to a less than significant level: modification of Goal 6.6 to recognize the potential health hazards from hazardous materials; compliance with EDCAPCD rules and regulations regarding equipment operation and dust control; and requirement for a soil survey prior to grading to detect the presence of serpentine rocks or soils.

**Impact 10.2.4: Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Substantial Pollutant Concentrations.** A microscale CO analysis was conducted to determine if certain intersections would produce CO levels in exceedence of either the CAAQS or NAAQS. The following intersections were analyzed: White Rock Road and Latrobe Road, State Route 193 and State Route 49, Green Valley Road and Salmon Falls Road/El Dorado Hills Boulevard, U.S. Highway 50 and Spring Street, and the area along Missouri Flat Road from the intersection at Prospectors Plaza to the north to Mother Lode Drive to the south. The analysis determined that receptors located in proximity to Latrobe Road and White Rock Road and along Missouri Flat Road could be exposed to CO levels in excess of the 1-hour California standard of 22 ppm and 8 hour California standard of 9.1 ppm and the Federal standard of 9.5 ppm. No receptors would be exposed to CO levels in excess of the Federal 35-ppm 1-hour standard.

Under the General Plan Alternative, it is determined through a microscale CO analysis that although fewer vehicle trips would be generated, many of the intersections analyzed actually realized greater volumes of traffic and higher CO concentrations at receptor locations. As with the Project Description, while no

receptors would be exposed to CO levels in excess of the 1-hour Federal standard of 35 ppm, receptors located in proximity to Latrobe Road and White Rock Road and along Missouri Flat Road could be exposed to levels in excess of the 1-hour California standard of 20 ppm and the 8-hour California and Federal standards of 9.1 and 9.5, respectively.

An intersection analysis was not performed for the No Project Alternative. In accordance with the DTIM model runs, this Alternative is projected to generate roughly the same amount of vehicle mileage on a daily basis as the Project Description and is therefore anticipated to produce roughly the same intersection emission levels. However, as shown in the analysis of the General Plan Alternative, these emission levels could vary slightly depending on actual vehicle travel patterns.

A number of Project Description policies are determined to partially mitigate this impact. The following mitigation measures are proposed to aid in reducing this impact: exclusion of on-street parking and minimal building setbacks in Policy 2.1.4.4; exclusion of reduced setbacks and on-street parking from Policy 2.8.2.1; and modification of Policy 6.7.6.1 to ensure that sensitive receptors (schools, playgrounds, day care centers, retirement homes, hospitals, etc.) are sited away from significant sources of air pollution. Although these mitigation measures are expected to reduce this impact to a less than significant level for new development, the impact is expected to remain significant for existing receptors located in areas that exceed the CAAQS.

Impact 10.2.5: Conflict with Programs in APCD Air Quality Attainment Plan. The General Plan must be consistent with the Air Quality Attainment Plan. It is determined that because the Air Quality Plan is based upon SACOG regional projections, for the Project Description to be consistent with the Air Quality Plan, it should encourage economic development leading to more local employment. Until a jobs/housing balance of 1.0 or better is achieved, the Project Description will contribute less to emissions reductions than could otherwise be achieved. The impact is considered significant.

It is determined that the General Plan Alternative would further improve the jobs/housing ratio by reducing the proposed number of dwellings, raising the per capita number of jobs in the area and/or locating those jobs closer to residential areas. This is evidenced by the traffic analysis that predicts an average home-to-work distance of 18.5 miles for the Project Description and only 18.3 miles for the General Plan Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative it is determined that increased residential development would occur and without proper planning and zoning, is projected to contribute to more residential land use than job-producing land uses, further deteriorating the jobs/housing balance. Additionally, without the implementation

of the various land use, traffic control, and energy efficiency measures contained in the Project Description, greater levels of emissions could be generated from all emission sources. If this were allowed to occur, this Alternative would not be in conformance with the goals of the Attainment Plan.

It is determined that a number of Project Description policies would assure consistency with programs in the Air Quality Attainment Plan. An additional mitigation measure is included requiring the County, in cooperation with the Economic Providers Network, to develop a comprehensive regional economic program.

It is determined that this impact would remain significant until a jobs/housing balance of 1.0 or greater is achieved.

## **K. Noise**

Four impacts were analyzed in this section. Noise impacts were determined by comparison of overall noise levels to applicable Federal, State, or local noise level standards and by the expected change in ambient noise levels which will occur as a result of the Project Description or Alternatives.

Impact 11.3.1: *Increase in Traffic Noise.* It is determined that the Project Description would result in an increase in traffic noise levels. The potential exists for traffic noise levels at existing and future land uses to exceed acceptable noise exposure. Future noise-sensitive uses could be located inside the 60 dB  $L_{dn}$  roadway noise contours. Increased noise levels associated with traffic may encroach upon existing noise-sensitive land uses or further increase noise levels already in excess of 60 dB  $L_{dn}$ . Tables V-11-5 and V-11-6 in the DEIR text provide results of this analysis by Regional Analysis Area. Areas where a significant increase in noise would occur are marked in the tables. Noise levels would increase overall up to 3.9 dB Ldn (in Regional Analysis Area 1) in 2015. The overall noise levels for the Project Description increase significantly for all Regional Analysis Areas, except Area 4 and the impact is therefore considered significant.

Under the General Plan Alternative, noise levels are predicted to be generally 1 to 3 dB less than those for the Project Description. The most significant increase would occur in Regional Analysis Area 1 at Buildout. Although noise levels under this Alternative are expected to be 1 to 3 dB lower than those under the Project Description, the impact is still considered potentially significant.

Detailed modeling of noise impacts was not conducted for the No Project Alternative. A summary analysis was done using the results of the model analysis done for the Project Description. Under the No Project Alternative noise levels are expected to be slightly lower than for the Project Description, ranging



in an increase of less than 0.5 dB to 8.5 dB (in Regional Analysis Area 1). The impact is considered significant for this Alternative.

A number of policies in the Project Description are determined to mitigate this impact to a less than significant level. A policy containing three criteria is recommended that could be used as a test of significance for roadway improvement projects.

**Impact 11.3.2: Increase in Noise Levels Due to Fixed or Non-transportation Noise Sources.** As additional development occurs throughout the County, the potential exists for noise-sensitive land uses to encroach upon existing or proposed fixed noise sources. The potential also exists for new fixed noise sources to encroach upon existing or proposed noise-sensitive land uses. Implementation of the Project Description land use maps results in additional commercial, industrial or office space within each of the communities and towns within the County. In addition, each of the communities and towns within the County propose additional residential uses. It is determined that the Project Description will result in additional lands with Commercial, Industrial, Public Facilities, and Research and Development land use designations. These land uses could result in noise impacts on adjacent and nearby residential uses. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Under the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative, the impacts are determined to be similar and therefore potentially significant.

It is noted that it is impossible to determine exact impacts of these land uses without site specific studies, which would be conducted when the projects are proposed. Although policies in the Project Description are determined to reduce this impact to a less than significant level, an additional mitigation measure is recommended to apply an “ambient plus” noise level standard which would consider existing background noise levels (e.g., noise levels on a project would be allowed to increase by up to 5 dB).

**Impact 11.3.3: Aircraft Noise at Proposed Noise-Sensitive Land Uses.** It is determined that the Project Description may result in additional noise-sensitive land uses located within the 60 dB CNEL contours for existing aviation facilities (Cameron Airpark Airport, Placerville Airport, Georgetown Airport, and the Lake Tahoe Airport). This impact is determined to be potentially significant.

Under the General Plan Alternative and No Project Alternative, there is also a potential for additional noise-sensitive lands use located within the 60 dB CNEL contours for existing aviation facilities. These impacts are determined to be potentially significant.

Policies in the Project Description are determined to reduce this impact to a less than significant level. An additional measure is recommended stating that airports within the County update their Master Plans or CLUPS to develop noise level contours for 2015.

Impact 11.3.4: Background Noise Levels Will Increase. Background noise levels due to human activities are expected to rise with the increase in population. The primary noise level increase, however, will be associated with traffic noise. A general “rule of thumb” is stated that as population doubles, background noise levels could increase by approximately 3 dB. An analysis of projected background noise levels is made by Regional Analysis Area Increases in background noise levels are considered significant for Regional Analysis Areas 1, 2, 3 and 5.

Background noise levels are expected to be 1 to 3 dB less for the General Plan Alternative and 1.5 to 3 dB more for the No Project Alternative. The impacts are considered significant for both Alternatives.

Policies in the Project Description will aid in reducing noise levels. An additional mitigation measure is recommended to require an ongoing Community Noise Survey to determine increases in background noise levels due to development as a result of implementation of the General Plan.

## **L. Cultural Resources**

Two impacts are analyzed in this section, as follows:

Impact 12.2.1: Disturbance or destruction of prehistoric or historic sites, properties, or areas of ethnic significance, “important archaeological resources” as defined in Appendix K of the CEQA Guidelines and properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. It is determined that cultural resources, both prehistoric and historic, can be found almost anywhere in the County. Analysis of the cultural resource sensitivity maps and research into prehistoric settlement patterns reveals that although the heaviest concentration of sites appears to be below the 3,500-4,000 foot elevation, many sites have also been recorded at higher elevations. In addition, it is noted that locations near water (rivers, creeks, seasonal drainages and springs) and in relatively flat areas or meadows were preferred and are particularly sensitive in terms of the presence of cultural resources. Site occurrences are expected to be high along the South Fork of the American River, North and Middle Forks of the Cosumnes River, and the many creeks that drain the County. Approximately 1,200 sites have thus far been recorded in the County. A conservative estimate is that less than 10 percent of the County has been surveyed for the presence of cultural resources. Literally thousands of sites may yet be unidentified. Impacts to these resources would be the most pronounced in Regional Analysis Area 1 where the most

growth would take place but could occur in any of the Regional Analysis Areas. This impact is determined to be potentially significant for the Project Description

Under the General Plan Alternative, although lower in growth intensity, there is also the potential for substantially impacting known and unidentified cultural resources. The impact would be lessened, however, in that many areas (in particular in the Latrobe, Cool/Pilot Hill, Georgetown, Diamond Springs/El Dorado and Somerset Market Areas) would become lower in density (e.g., from Rural Residential [10 acre minimum] to Rural Residential Low Density [40 acre minimum] and Rural Residential to Natural Resource [40 acre minimum] in the river canyons). The impacts to cultural resources are considered significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, there is also the potential for a significant adverse effect on both prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Although many of the Environmental Impact Reports completed for the Area Plans contain mitigation measures to ensure the identification and protection of cultural resources, a consistent program for cultural resources is not available under the Plans. The impacts to cultural resources are considered significant for this Alternative.

Impacts to cultural resources would be partially mitigated by policies contained within the Project Description. Additional mitigation, as follows, would help reduce impacts: inclusion of language “avoid cultural resources” in Planned Development policy; modification of Policy 7.5.1.1 to include development of project review guidelines, including requirement for consultation with local Native American groups, monitoring procedures, and development of guidelines on treatment of cultural resources; creation of Cultural Resources Preservation Commission to aid in the protection and preservation of the County’s cultural resources; preservation of historic structures; treatment of human remains and associated burial goods as provided for in Appendix K of the CEQA Guidelines; and consideration of cultural resources impacts when analyzing rezoning requests for higher density land uses. It is determined that even though the impacts would be lessened through implementation of these mitigation measures, total protection could not be ensured, and this remains a significant impact.

Impact 12.2.2: *Indirect impacts through an increase in human activity.* Indirect impacts could occur within all Regional Analysis Areas with the increase in population throughout the County, but would be more pronounced in Regional Analysis Area 1. Indirect impacts take the form of disturbance due to hiking/equestrian trails, off-road vehicle use, and other human-related activities. The potential for vandalism is also increased. This impact is potentially significant for the Project Description.



Growth potential is lower under the General Plan Alternative but would still lead to impacts to known and unknown cultural resource. The impact, therefore, is considered significant for this Alternative.

Under the No Project Alternative, with its higher growth potential, the potential for indirect impacts is greater, and the impact is considered significant for this Alternative.

It is determined that there are no other mitigation measures available for this impact other than those stated under Impact 12.2.1 above.

## **M. Visual Quality**

Two impacts are analyzed under this Section. As the two impacts have been determined to be closely associated with each other, they have been analyzed together.

Impact 13.2.1: Physical changes of the existing rural/natural lands to a built (urban) land use pattern/form.

Impact 13.2.2: Introduction of light and glare into the newly established or expanded built (urban) communities.

In an overview discussion of these impacts it is noted that the change from existing rural, pastoral, or natural character to a built land use pattern will create the most dramatic visual change to the County, particularly as viewed from U.S. Highway 50. It is also noted that visual quality is also influenced by nighttime factors through night lighting. Impacts can occur on a site-by-site basis and aggregate cumulatively up to larger geographic areas (neighborhoods, communities, etc.). Analysis of these impacts is further broken down into Regional Analysis Areas and contains an examination of individual communities and Rural Centers within each area. It is noted that the majority of the growth would occur in Regional Analysis Area 1, and it would therefore experience the most dramatic change. Communities would potentially grow together due to in-fill between the existing communities. Overall, the impacts of the Project Description will be significant. This is particularly recognized within the Community Regions along U.S. Highway 50. Even the Rural Centers and Rural Regions will experience incremental visual change over the Plan period (2015) with Pilot Hill experiencing the most dramatic potential change. These effects are determined to be cumulatively significant at Plan Buildout.

Under the General Plan Alternative, the visual impact is determined to be generally similar to that of the Project Description in the Community Regions and Rural Centers. In the Rural Regions, the impact would be less as the potential buildout and densities would be less. Lands within these areas will experience

potentially less density, reduced land modifications, less road building, and less night lighting. The overall impact at Plan Buildout will be noticeably less but would remain cumulatively significant at Buildout.

Under the No Project Alternative, visual impacts are determined to be similar to the Project Description and General Plan Alternative. The most significant difference would be the greater intensity of growth within the Rural Regions which could change the visual character from a natural one to a low density residential estate character. The Official State Scenic Highway designation could be compromised by the introduction of potential development that would replace the natural landscape. It is determined that this impact would be cumulatively significant for this Alternative.

Many policies from the Project Description are listed that would partially mitigate the visual effects of the Plan. The impacts would be further reduced by the addition of the following mitigation measures: modification of Policy 2.1.4.4 to include standards for reduction of setbacks to encourage rear parking lots, a common continuous landscape program, and low intensity lighting; requiring setback restrictions or building envelopes on discretionary development projects to preclude development on steep slopes; limiting of mass pad grading on parcels greater than 10,000 square feet and/or with an average cross slope of 15 percent or greater; precluding strip commercial; accommodating separation between communities of Diamond Springs and El Dorado by maintaining zoning at the lowest density range within the Medium Density Residential designation; provision of residential setbacks at 60 CNEL noise contour line, prohibition of sound walls within the foreground area of a scenic corridor and grading standards for foreground areas; application of the scenic corridor combining zone district to the foreground areas in Community Regions and Rural Centers within identified scenic corridors; precluding intensive land uses at the El Dorado Road (south), Greenstone Road, Bass Lake Road, and Shingle Springs Drive interchanges with U.S. Highway 50; requirement for 660 foot scenic corridor on either side of the following highways: U.S. Highway 50 from Pollock Pines to South Lake Tahoe and all of State Routes 88 and 89; designation of certain highways and roads as scenic corridors; requirement that the County Scenic Highway Ordinance include recommendations from the Gold Rush Parkway Plan and Action Plan; and limit the Pilot Hill Rural Center to the west side of State Route 49.

It is determined that the above impacts will not be reduced to a less than significant level and therefore are considered significant unavoidable impacts.

## VI. CEQA Considerations

Four required CEQA sections are discussed in this chapter: Short-Term Use Versus Long-Term Productivity, Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes, Energy Conservation, and the Environmentally-Preferred Alternative.

### A. Short-Term Use Versus Long-Term Productivity

It is determined that on a short-term basis, land would be developed (for use in housing, commercial and industrial activity, roads and public facilities) which would lead to adverse effects such as non-attainment of air quality standards, loss of natural and cultural resources, and an increasing demand for both public services and facilities. In the long-term, it is determined that land use strategies developed through the General Plan would serve to centralize growth in urbanized communities resulting in a more efficient use of services, upgrading of air quality through more transit-oriented growth patterns, and the conservation of natural and cultural resources, etc.

### B. Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

It is determined that a number of resources could be committed to other uses through adoption of the General Plan:

1. Non-renewable resources such as mineralized lands and other lands of economic extractive value could be increased in density or subjected to incompatible land uses, precluding their future beneficial use.
2. Lands containing choice agricultural soils could be converted to non-agricultural uses.
3. Natural resources such as timberlands, wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors, watershed lands, areas of rare and endangered plants, and areas of high visual quality could be developed into residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

### C. Energy Conservation

Section 15126(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of energy impacts of a proposed project with emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful and unnecessary consumption of energy together with energy conservation mitigation measures that are proposed. These impacts are analyzed in the Public Services and Infrastructure, Transportation, and Air Quality sections of the DEIR document. In conjunction with policies contained in the Project Description that would mitigate energy impacts, additional mitigation measures are listed under each section discussed above.



#### D. Environmentally-Preferred Alternative

Section 15126(d)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an environmentally-preferred alternative be identified in an EIR. As discussed in Chapter I of the DEIR document, the impacts of the Project Description, General Plan Alternative, and No Project Alternative are evaluated for each of 13 impact sections. In total, 64 separate impacts were analyzed in these sections. Of these impacts, 55 were determined to be significant for the Project Description, 52 for the General Plan Alternative, and 54 for the No Project Alternative. After mitigation of the Project Description, 26 impacts remained significant and unavoidable. Based on this analysis, it is determined that the environmentally-preferred alternative is the mitigated Project Description.

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